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# The Shape of Things

WE APPROACH THE NEW YEAR WITH HOPE—a tenuous hope—in man's ability to devise means to prevent his self-destruction. In much less time than it took to perfect the atom bomb, an international commission of scientists and policy-makers has come close to agreement on a system of atomic-energy control. It is against this background that one must view what transpired in the Atomic Energy Commission late last week. Taking little account of the six-months' labor of the commission, Mr. Baruch, head of the U. S. delegation, called for a showdown on a resolution embodying the essentials of the American plan with a specific demand for abolition of the veto in matters of punishment for treaty violations. The effect of such a resolution would have been to bypass the detailed reports the commission has been preparing. It would have made the commission a tail to Mr. Baruch's kite and flagrantly disregarded the disarmament resolution adopted after much debate by the U. N. Assembly. The Canadian representative, General Andrew McNaughton, who has played a consistently constructive role on the commission, saved the day by an amendment which, while accepting "the principles on which the findings and recommendations proposed by the representatives of the United States are based," referred the whole matter back to the working committee of the commission for redrafting, with instructions to take into account the U. N. disarmament resolution. The important result of the crisis is that the commission has asserted its authority over an attempt at godlike intervention by one of its members. It now has a chance to bring the first stage of its work to a satisfactory conclusion. We do not expect that its report will in itself provide the ramparts the world needs against atomic doom. But at least we have reason to hope that it will have laid the foundation.

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THE COMPARATIVE ACCORD WITH WHICH the Security Council has accepted the United States resolution on Greece is more than welcome, though there should be no pretense that the terms of reference are broad enough to enable the United Nations to reach a solution of the real problem of Greece. Accepting the situation in that country as it is now, without reference to original responsibilities, it is certain that the present government is unrepresentative, tyrannical, and incompetent to lead Greece toward a prosperous and democratic way of life. Whatever may be the truth in Mr. Tsaldaris's charges against his Balkan neighbors, there can be no doubt that social discontent in Greece is deep and justified. Partisan submission, unaccompanied by governmental reform and the acceptance of a vigorous liberal program, will settle nothing but a diplomatic issue. We feel, therefore, that the Russians were right in insisting that the commission be empowered to probe into strife-provoking conditions within Greece. If the commission is to make proposals for averting a continuance of the present troubles, then to define them as merely border violations is sure to lead to Soviet dissent and possibly a resort to the veto. In any case, the Security Council's present decision does not exempt London and Washington from their duty of making the strongest recommendations to Athens. The Greek partisan movement has announced its conditions for a cessation of civil war. Some of them may be inacceptable to a broad middle-of-the-way government. Yet the basis for settlement exists. Even without direct negotiations between Athens and the partisans, a prompt and thorough liberalization of the government would put an end to the tragic waste of life and resources which threatens Greece with ruin.

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JUAN PERON, THE ARGENTINE DICTATOR, has scored a major triumph by negotiating a commercial pact with Chile that should do much to advance his political, military, and industrial ambitions. The agreement goes far beyond the usual commercial treaty; so far, writes Frank Kluckhorn in New York *Times*, "that few here doubt it implies the closest political ties as well." President Gonzalez Videla of Chile, it is true, has declared that the pact is devoid of political significance but the terms tell their own story. Henceforth, the two countries will comprise a virtual customs union; they will use each others' ports freely, give mutual preferences to each others' aviation, shipping, and marine insurance. Chile is to receive a $150 million credit from Argentina to be used for the purchase of food, for public works such as the reconstruction of the trans-Andean railroad, and for the development of raw material and other

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## • IN THIS ISSUE •

EDITORIALS

The Shape of Things 741
Is There a Middle Way? 744
Moscow and Iran 745
Mission to Madrid *by J. Alvarez del Vayo* 746

ARTICLES

An Old Southern Custom *by Tris Coffin* 747
Capitalism's Happy New Year *by Robert Lynd* 748
Winter Season in Moscow *by Alexander Werth* 751
Homeless America II. Bailing Out the Builders *by Charles Abrams* 753
The Last Skyscraper *by Frederick Gutheim* 755
"The Republic of India" *by Shiva Rao* 757
In the Wind 758
Everybody's Business *by Keith Hutchison* 759
In One Ear *by Lou Frankel* 760

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Seaman's Luck. *A poem by Robert Fitzgerald* 761
Jazz and Categories *by Wilder Hobson* 761
The Unmoved Mover *by Ben B. Seligman* 762
Chopping a Teakettle *by Isaac Rosenfeld* 762
Briefer Comment 763
Films *by James Agee* 766
Music *by B. H. Haggin* 766
Art *by Clement Greenberg* 767

CROSSWORD PUZZLE No. 192 *by Jack Barrett* 768

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resources required by Argentina to carry out its five-year industrial plan. Argentina, in turn, will enjoy priority in purchasing Chilean products and a preferred place in the Chilean market for its manufactures. All "concessions and advantages reciprocally granted remain excluded from the effects of most-favored-nation treaties"—even those with neighboring states. Such provisions are a direct blow at the ideal of non-discriminatory trade which the United States has been busily promoting and a strong protest from the State Department seems to be indicated. Nevertheless, we must recognize our own responsibility in driving Chile into Perón's arms. Our capitalists have alternately exploited and neglected that country, drawing fortunes from its natural wealth but doing little to establish a stable and progressive economy. A land without capital, it has turned to Argentina for aid in developing industry because it could obtain no adequate help from us.

*

PERON'S SUCCESS WITH THE CHILEANS IS ONE more indication that Ambassador Messersmith has been getting nowhere at all with his policy of honeyed indulgence. The pattern of Argentine statism becomes plainer by the week: a drastic military expansion, with compulsory training for all Argentines between twelve and fifty, a five-year plan of industrialization that is clearly geared to the needs of war, a program of aggressive economic expansion abroad and one-man rule at home. Messersmith has been called to Washington for discussions, and while the State Department is coy about details, it no longer pretends that the Ambassador is returning "for his health"—unless that term includes political well-being. Secretary Byrnes now indicates that the talks will center around a departmental matter. In view of the sharp note which he is known to have sent Messersmith only a month ago, it is not far-fetched to assume that this refers to the matter of the department's having one policy on Argentina and the Ambassador another. Senator Brewster of Maine, returning from a tour of South America, asks that this "schizophrenic" policy be clarified. It should be, of course, but the tenor of the Senator's remarks suggests the kind of "clarification" that goes with umbrellas.

*

A YEAR AGO, WE PRAISED MR. TRUMAN'S directive on China as bold and constructive. It is impossible to be similarly enthusiastic about the 1946 version of that statement, issued last week. While it shows that Washington has not weakened in its desire to promote a democratic solution in China, nothing in it is calculated to hasten such a solution. Some dramatic gesture was needed to break the logjam at Nanking, but the President's statement offers little except a long-winded defense of American policy. Only one new fact is disclosed: the Chinese government has not been permitted

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to avail itself of the $500,000,000 credit granted some months ago—presumably because of its failure to set up a unified government. The beneficial effect of withholding financial support is offset, however, by the admission that other kinds of assistance, amounting to some $1,466,000,000, have been given since V-J Day. The President fails to recognize the stubborn fact that our policy of friendly mediation, however soundly conceived, has failed. While some satisfaction may be derived from Chiang Kai-shek's dramatic intervention at the National Assembly to prevent the right wing from reinstating the totalitarian 1936 draft of the constitution, the chance of ending civil strife through one-power mediation is slight. Because of the scale of American assistance to the Kuomintang, General Marshall has forfeited the confidence of the Communists and the Democratic League and convinced right-wing Kuomintang leaders that distrust of Russia will force the United States to support Nanking at all hazards. A modest reason for hope is provided in a suggestion which has just been advanced by Senators Murray and Flanders with the backing of a number of Far Eastern experts. They propose mediation in the Chinese struggle by the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. While Nanking is understandably cool to the idea, the present moment would seem to be especially propitious for pressing it.

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EXCEPT FOR NEWSPAPERMEN, THERE IS NO class of wage-earner so wretched that its strikes go unnoticed in the press. Striking coal-miners, teachers, gravediggers, and pearl-divers all have their day in the papers, even if it isn't a good day; but let the men who *make* the papers walk out and a blanket of silence envelops them that would send a press agent to an early grave. A case in point is the strike of Newspaper Guildsmen against J. David Stern, publisher of the Philadelphia *Record* and the Camden *Courier-Post*. Soon after the strike was called, the publisher stated his case not only in his own papers, put out by a skeleton staff of executives, but through paid advertisements in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* and the *Evening Bulletin*. Both these journals have refused to accept advertisements setting forth the Guild's reply. The strike has been marked by violence and police brutality that are normally page-one copy for any paper, and in the Stern papers fuel for trenchant and crusading editorials as well. But in the case of the Guild strike such incidents have been ignored by the Philadelphia press or given a stick on page six. Local radio stations, controlled by the papers, have flatly refused to match the time given to management with free time to the strikers. Aside from the merits of the Guild's demands—and they are moderate enough—Mr. Stern's conduct in the strike comes as a shock to those who have long thought of him as a friend of labor and a champion of civil liberties. He has repeatedly rejected compromises and refuses to hear of any wage increase greater than 12 per cent—in contrast to the 20 per cent raise given by the non-Guild Chicago *Tribune*, among others. And the man who has so often damned the ruthlessness of the "barons of industry" has had no word to say about the slugging of his own employees by Philadelphia police.

*

EUGENE TALMADGE WAS PROBABLY A GOOD husband, a kind father, and a lover of animals. But politically he was sheer poison, and it would be hypocritical for us to pretend to feel anything but relief at the intervention of death to prevent his taking office as Governor of Georgia for the fourth time. The platform on which he stood was the reestablishment of "white supremacy" in the state by legislation designed to circumvent the Supreme Court's ruling that Negroes could not be barred from the primaries. In addition, he had promised to drop the prosecution of the Klan, which Governor Arnall has been vigorously pressing, and no doubt he would have made Georgia safe for its newest purveyors of intolerance—the Columbians. Talmadge is reported to have expressed a dying wish that his successor would keep his campaign promises. His followers are apparently backing his son Herman, the recipient of a large write-in vote at last month's general election, for selection by the General Assembly. The fact that the son sought such a vote in nominal competition with his father suggests that an attempt was being made to provide for the contingency which has now arisen. However, the constitutional position is extremely obscure, with every Georgian faction pressing its own interpretation. Fred Hand, speaker-designate of the General Assembly, says that a new election must be held as soon as possible, and that would certainly seem to be the most democratic method of settling the issue. It would at least give the people of Georgia a chance to retrieve the backward step which they took last summer.

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REPUBLICANS WHO WOULD BE PRESIDENT are forgetting that it may be as fatal for a candidate to grab for the nomination prematurely as it is for a starving man to rush food down his gullet. With the G. O. P. convention eighteen months away, we already have one avowed hopeful, three who do not choose to run but can't be pried out of their track suits, and any number of others who betray no sign of eagerness except that their tongues are hanging out. Harold Stassen, with a Willkie-like scorn for tradition, has honestly declared himself a candidate and opened a campaign office. What is more, he has told labor not to ask for more money now, advised management not to press for restrictive labor legislation, and urged consumers to refuse to buy at inflated prices. Without minimizing the refreshing quality of this performance, it is fair to point out that Stassen has nothing to lose by boldness. Poison to the

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party leaders, his only chance is to make a daring appeal to the rank and file. Dewey, Taft, and Vandenberg are now on record with coy disavowals of an ambition that all three are plainly straining to realize. Taft forces, strong in the National Committee, have eased a pro-Dewey official out of her job as director of the women's division. John W. Bricker, whom Taft nominated for the Senate in the hope that he would sooner or later display his ineptitude, is already living up to expectations. Still to be sworn in, he has Washington buzzing with reports of his gauche performance at the Gridiron Dinner. Vandenberg has abandoned his post as adviser to Secretary Byrnes, a position that was compromising him with the McCormick faction of the party, and is consolidating his power in the Senate for a last fling at the nomination. Dewey, counted on for New York's forty-seven electoral votes, has been lining up the G. O. P. Congressmen of that state to support Charles Halleck, a Dewey man, as majority leader of the House, in order to offset Taft's advantage as majority leader of the Senate. And in California sits Governor Warren, happily convinced that all this throat-cutting can only leave more oats for a quiet dark horse.

# *Is There a Middle Way?*

WHETHER the members of the President's Council of Economic Advisers have the drive and intellectual capacity to perform successfully the formidable tasks assigned to them, is a still unanswered question. Their first report shows they are at least excellent diplomats. It is full of seasonal cheer and good humor and includes a little something for everybody.

To the nation at large the report offers fair hope for some years of prosperity, subject to a possible minor recession in 1947. The *Wall Street Journal* school of thought gets a present of a caricature of Keynsian economics in which exclusive reliance on government fiscal measures to prevent unemployment is condemned as akin to the Roman formula of "bread and circuses." To balance the account, however, planners are comforted by an able analysis of the "Spartan" folly of believing that cyclical depressions are not only inevitable but morally valuable. And "management and labor, farmers, and financiers" are collectively wooed with the flattery of an appeal to "their practical wisdom."

A large part of the report is devoted to a defense of the Employment Act of 1946, to which the council owes its being, and to a discussion of the political and economic philosophies that measure embodies. The claim is made that the act reflects the general American inclination toward a middle way which avoids exclusive reliance in economic affairs on either private enterprise or government. Rejecting the view that the measure which finally emerged from Congress was a much-diluted version of the original, the report asserts that "it is in fact a broad enabling act of great flexibility as well as vigor." True, it does not "legislate any specific remedy into use," but it does clearly establish the "responsibility of the federal government to use all practical means consistent with its needs and obligations and other essential considerations of national policy . . . to coordinate and utilize all its plans, functions, and resources for the stated purposes of the act—maximum production, employment, and purchasing power."

We agree with the council that the act, for all its weaknesses and omissions, is sufficiently broad and flexible to cover whatever actions are necessary to implement its goals. We are sure that if a new mass-unemployment crisis arises, public opinion will regard it as authorizing government intervention in the national economy on a scale that will dwarf the New Deal experiments of the thirties. But, as we see it, the value of the act must be judged not by the emergency use which may be made of it, but by the extent to which it helps to prevent emergencies from occurring. On this point the first report of the economic advisers is unhelpfully vague. They tell us that in the years immediately ahead the stimuli to production should be sufficiently powerful to obviate the need for "heroic measures"; they suggest that this period can be employed for planning a "gradual shift in expenditure and resource use" so that "more of those semi-luxuries, those welfare and culture goods," can be placed within reach of all. This sounds fine, but we would life to see the program spelled out more specifically in terms of education, housing, health, and so forth.

It must be recognized that the political climate just now is unfavorable to long-term planning of this kind. A spokesman for the National Association of Manufacturers may hail the council's report as "an excellent document," but his pleasure is due to the fact that it appears to place no obstacles in the way of the "Operation Capitalism" on which Robert Lynd reports on page 748. The N. A. M., knowing full well that the current comeback of private enterprise will prove but fleeting unless a high level of employment can be sustained, is offering "practical leadership" for "the resumption of economic progress." In short, it is proposing to relieve the President and Congress of the responsibilities placed on them by the Employment Act. The present mood of both suggest that they will be only too happy to surrender their burdens.

It is probable, therefore, that despite the obvious good intentions of the Council of Economic Advisers it will not be permitted to work seriously on preventive measures; it will be called in for serious consultation only when "the sickness of an acquisitive society" forces itself very disagreeably on public attention. That is why we

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find ourselves sharing Mr. Lynd's doubts about the practicality of a middle way or, as he puts it, of "a liberal compromise between modern monopoly capitalism and socialism."

# Moscow and Iran

THE sudden collapse of the Azerbaijan Autonomous Republic, set up last year with Russian backing, has apparently confirmed those who have always maintained that the Tabriz regime lacked popular support. Others have seen in Moscow's seeming indifference a proof of weakness in the Soviet Union itself, and in some quarters there has been a too ready assumption that the Red Army is the only real mainstay of governments friendly to Russia. The Turkish leaders have regarded the downfall as a signal that they may now safely counter Russian pressure and have promptly suppressed opposition newspapers—Communist and liberal alike—and a number of trade unions.

Undoubtedly, events have proved that the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan was politically weak. Azerbaijan, which took a prominent part in the establishment of constitutional government in Persia in 1906, has long nourished the desire for autonomy. In a region where land rents often amount to two-thirds of the annual crops a demand for agrarian reform has also been strong. All this undoubtedly provided a basis for political action against the government at Teheran, dominated as it is by reactionary parties and individuals. Similarities of language and culture with the neighboring regions of Russia might have been expected to do something to offset the natural dislike of foreign intervention. And Russian strong-arm methods seem not to have been resented at first, for reports from Tabriz agree that in the early months of its existence the autonomous regime was welcomed by a great majority of the peasantry.

The same sources attribute its loss of popularity since then to abuses committed by the Democrats. The regime began "to take too much for itself." The peasants, willing enough to expropriate the landlords, apparently resented contributions to the government, as peasants have often done in other places. Again, in the backward mountain valleys where the warrior spirit is strong and whence support might have been drawn, the regime was compelled to rely on persons little adapted to organized political life. There may have been rural resentment of the urban Tudeh, virtually a Communist party, which enjoyed special privileges in Tabriz and other towns. As a total result, the hard-core troops on which the regime could depend were few in number, and the loosely organized militia had no will to resist the heavily armored columns of Teheran.

The regime has vanished, and the diplomatic picture in the Near East is somewhat clearer than it was. But the political result may be less desirable. Conservative gains in the general elections last Sunday, indicated by returns which are still incomplete, will mean a definite setback in Persia's political development. But the country has so long needed drastic reform that neither repression nor constitutional reaction can silence popular demands for change or guarantee a stable government in Teheran.

It remains to account for Russia's hands-off attitude toward its late protégé. Is this a sign of recently developed weakness? We do not doubt that opposition within the U. N., a decision to concentrate upon the central problems of Europe, and even the obvious economic difficulties in the Soviet Union may have been contributing factors. Yet, even assuming that Azerbaijan's resistance might have been stiffened by Russian pressure, the events of the past week have only pointed up the logic of a situation that has not changed. If Russia's primary intention was to serve its economic and strategic aims by seating Azerbaijan deputies in the Teheran parliament, then outright secession was never its aim. On the contrary, Russian interests require an early validation by the Teheran parliament of the oil deals in northern Iran. Qavam's refusal to call the necessary elections as long as Azerbaijan was cut off from the rest of Persia had already made an alternative Russian policy inevitable. The question now is, what course will the Soviet government follow in the future?

Before the First World War, British and Russian relations were regulated by a two-power agreement dividing Iran into exclusive "spheres of influence." It is known that Mr. Bevin proposed to Mr. Stalin that the old arrangement be revived in an amended form. Russia was invited to join with Britain and Iran in developing the Persian oil fields. The suggestion was turned down. If Mr. Stalin now reverts to this proposal he may find London in a different mood, for British influence is now much stronger in Teheran. Nevertheless, if renewed conversations on Iran do take place, the Russian government will have arguments to which Mr. Bevin might be wise to listen. Within the Soviet Union there is considerable support for a policy of reconciliation with Britain; the world situation, as well as the prospects for socialism in Europe and Labor control in England, will certainly profit by a rapprochement between Britain and the Soviet Union. Moscow's bargaining power is still great.


## IN THE RUSSIAN ZONE

*Nation* correspondent Joel Carmichael, just back in Paris from the Russian zone of Germany, has written an exciting series of articles, the first of which will appear next week.


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# *Mission to Madrid*

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

OVER the past weekend, the British government, complying with the decision of the General Assembly, recalled its Ambassador from Madrid. In the present situation, with the Franco regime overwhelmed by internal difficulties, the news of Britain's prompt action surely created a profound impression in Spain. And in other countries many people may have jumped to the conclusion that the restoration of Spanish democracy was now well on the way. But unfortunately, during the same week, a contrary indication was given in an Associated Press dispatch from London, quoting a "government source" as saying that "members of the British diplomatic mission to Spain had been examining the possibility of whether a coalition government could be established . . . to replace the Franco regime and carry on until elections could be held." And lest there be any illusion that this meant a democratic coalition, the British spokesman said that the so-called interim government would be composed of representatives of Spanish groups ranging from "the right-wing centrists to the left-wing centrists." Americans may be somewhat confused by these terms, but Spaniards know that "right-wing centrists" mean monarchists and generals, while "left-wing centrists" are a handful of deserters from the Republic.

Britain's conspiracy began to take shape many months ago, as my article in the July 6 issue of *The Nation* revealed. The idea behind it was simply this: in the event British-American support of Franco finally proved inadequate to maintain him in power, the Caudillo was to be replaced by a military-clerical regime, leavened by a few nominal Republicans, which would hold "free elections." This was also the essence of the American, Colombian, and Cuban proposals which were voted down by the United Nations. A careful reading of those resolutions shows that the original Anglo-American strategy at the United Nations was to prevent a showdown with Franco; when that failed, the Big Two withdrew to their second line of attack—the British maneuver in Madrid.

A Spanish "Munich" was defeated in the Assembly when the nations voted not only to call back their heads of missions but to instruct the Security Council to continue to exercise vigilance over Spanish developments. The British and Americans supported the resolution *à contre-coeur*, the former because of the revolt against Bevin's Spanish policy inside the Labor Party, the latter because they too were faced with a revolt by many of the Latin American countries which were aligned against the Franco regime. But one of the characteristics of Anglo-American "democratic" foreign policy seems to be contempt for the decisions of the United Nations. At one point in the debate on Spain, Senator Connally warned the subcommittee considering the question that the United States would "not be bound by any resolution passed by the General Assembly." Later, under pressure, he modified this astonishing statement. The British were more cautious, but they wasted no time in putting in motion their second-string strategy. For it is a race against time. Popular pressure in England is increasing: the other day a delegation of the Trades Union Congress waited upon Mr. Bevin, just home from the Assembly meeting, to demand again a complete break with Franco. Inside Spain the U. N. resolution has created an explosive situation: on the one hand, it has driven Franco to abandon his democratic pretenses and emerge in full fascist regalia; on the other, it has given a tremendous push to the Spanish resistance movement. London cannot afford to wait. Before very long, the Security Council will be called upon to reexamine the entire issue; it must be confronted with a *fait accompli* in Spain.

The British plan depends upon the collaboration of Spanish *capitulards*. By an odd coincidence, at the very moment the A. P. dispatch came over the wires, Indalecio Prieto, the right-wing-Socialist leader and author of the "plebiscite" scheme frequently discussed in these pages, delivered a speech in Mexico calling for the withdrawal of his two ministers from the Giral Cabinet, characterizing the government in exile as a "corpse," and declaring that, despite the Republican tradition of Spanish socialism, the kind of political or economic regime set up in Spain was of secondary importance. Though it contained a few demagogic attacks on British and American policy toward Spain, his speech was a clear summons not for reorganization but for outright dissolution of the Republican government in exile.

But all these clever manipulations have overlooked one key factor—the Spanish people. Prieto's statement has caused a storm of resentment in Mexico among even his own followers. Several resolutions have been passed by different groups condemning his stand; one correctly points out that the proposal to dissolve the government in exile is an insult to Mexico, which engaged its diplomatic prestige in the establishment of that regime on Mexican soil, and to the countries that have recognized Giral. The reaction of Spanish refugees in France is equally bitter, and there is no doubt that Prieto's influence among Republicans in Spain, which has been considerable, is fast evaporating.

Until now, the Anglo-American policy of supporting reaction has failed everywhere in Europe. It will meet defeat in Spain as well—defeat that will be paid for in blood. And when the new civil war, for which Western diplomacy has opened the way, breaks over Spain in all its fury, British gentlemen inside and outside the Labor Party and American humanitarians like Senator Connally will no doubt once more express their "profound regrets."

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# An Old Southern Custom

BY TRIS COFFIN

*Washington, December 20*

THE grimy and somewhat incoherent story of Mississippi politics drawled into microphones propped up on a desk in the Senate caucus room is a clear warning of how easily democracy can degenerate into a sordid racket. These hearings before the Senate War Investigating Committee were described by one awed Congressional secretary as "a postgraduate course in how to make politics pay." I counted ten different ways in which the shrunken little Mississippi Senator is alleged to have collected funds or other things of value without, apparently, running afoul of federal law. Violations of Mississippi law were shrugged off by witnesses as of no importance.

The various donors, according to statements made to the committee, were war contractors, who put up the "heavy sugar," patronage appointees, business men who had been assisted in priorities, and even an elderly drug addict. Bilbo's former secretary, Ed Terry, testified that the Senator had him draw up a list of 100 names from whom they might solicit funds. The trail of that mysterious quality, "influence," wandered over Washington, through the War Department, Justice Department, Bureau of Narcotics, and War Production Board. According to Terry, Senator Bilbo tried to get the Department of Justice to call off its prosecution of Abe Shushan, Huey Long lieutenant, and appealed to the Commissioner of Narcotics to give a Natchez dope fiend a permit for two grains of morphine a day. The Shushan deal had a highly legal flavor. Abe "lent" Bilbo $3,000, and the Senator gave him his note for it. When Bilbo was unsuccessful in his efforts with the Justice Department, Shushan is alleged to have threatened to "sell" the note to Bilbo's political opponents. In the narcotics case Terry accused Bilbo of accepting $1,500 to arrange for the addict to get his morphine.

The Bilbo operations were conducted vaguely, and without incriminating records, by a few cronies. It was not until one of them, Ed Terry, had a falling out with the gang that the facts came into the open.

Senator Bilbo's role in the combine was that of vote-getter. Bilbo has stayed in office, election after election, despite frequent charges of corruption, through his rabble-rousing talents and the indifference of the so-called "respectable" element in his state. The legal brains of the outfit was Forrest Jackson, the sharp and personable Bilbo protégé. Ed Terry and Bob Gandy were the confidential operatives. They solicited, collected, and paid money and made backroom arrangements. One reporter at the hearing described Terry's day of testimony as "Terry and the pirates." The promoter and organizer was A. B. Friend, the husky and bluff war contractor and Bilbo campaign manager. Architects interested in the proposed Washington municipal stadium went to Friend for a cooperative deal. Bilbo was chairman of the Senate District of Columbia Committee.

This small group composed the informal committee which was set up in 1942 allegedly to support the candidacy of Wall Doxey for reelection to the United States Senate. The committee was so informal that it kept no records and had no bank account or treasurer. Bilbo kept thousands of dollars given him by war contractors, supposedly for the Doxey campaign, under his pillow. The largest donor was the war contractor "Big Boy" Newton, who tossed in $25,000. (Doxey testified that he knew nothing about this alleged contribution to his campaign.) Bilbo, Jackson, and Gandy have all been vague about how this money was distributed—when, where, and how much. The informal committee offered a way for Senator Bilbo to receive thousands of dollars which cannot now be pinned down as illegal payments by a war contractor to a politician in return for his "influence."

Another of the Senator's schemes for raising money was to solicit contributions for the Juniper Creek Baptist Church, which is located on his property. He was the custodian of the church funds and the church's actual owner. He also solicited funds for the parsonage, a house with five bathrooms and eight bedrooms. The current pastor, "Brother" Smith, has built his own home near the church, thus raising the question whether he ever hoped to live in the gorgeous parsonage.

Another Bilbo project was setting up a fund to pay his alimony. It was for this purpose that the Shushan "loan" was arranged. The Senator's former private secretary testified she was fired when her father refused to share in this "charity."

One war contractor, Mike Morrissey, had his own little way of expressing his appreciation for services rendered him by Bilbo. Morrissey took over the operation of the Senator's farms for four years at a loss of $48,000. He gave his friend a Cadillac for a Christmas present and constructed a lake for him. Other easy-spending benefactors gave Bilbo furniture for his "dream house no. 2." The boys also chipped in to defray extra expenses in Bilbo's Washington office. They often lent him money with no intention of trying to collect it.

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A politician setting about deliberately to shake down persons for whom he might do favors could get many pointers from these hearings on Capitol Hill. In each case presented to the Senate committee some element is missing to prove conclusively that Bilbo or his associates wrung money out of war contractors or others. The Internal Revenue Department has been trying for almost a year to build up a case against the Bilbo gang on income-tax evasion. But, at least in the hearing, it has been extremely difficult to figure out how much money was received, how it was spent, and for what purpose. It is also difficult to determine which of the different sets of witnesses is lying and which is telling the truth.

The most damning testimony against Bilbo the man was given by the Senator himself. It was no proof of corruption or crookedness, but it showed a strange indifference to moral issues. Senator Ferguson was questioning Bilbo about money Terry collected from a Louisiana gambler. He said, "You knew he [Terry] had the money, and where he got it—from a gambler." Bilbo answered, "Well, he got the money. I didn't care who it was he got it from." At another point Ferguson compared the $25,000 Bilbo obtained from Newton with a small sum collected by Terry. Bilbo commented proudly, "Ah'm a good collector. Ah'm a better collector than Terry." About the gift of the Cadillac, the Mississippi Senator instructed Ferguson condescendingly: "It's just an old Southern custom. Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Of the charge that he worked energetically to obtain lucrative contracts of the cost-plus, fixed-fee variety for members of his gang, Bilbo said virtuously, "I have done no more than has been done by practically all my colleagues in the Senate." In his written statement he said blandly of a contractor, "Bernie Friend is a great organizer, an excellent engineer, and a high-toned Christian gentleman. I ought to know his ability because he has successfully managed two of my campaigns for United States Senator."

The rest of his defense, which both Ferguson and Mead said had no bearing on the hearing, was that Negroes and Communists were trying to persecute him. He also claimed that payments to him were "loans" which he will repay.

Every day Senators not on the committee have been sitting back in the corners of the large chamber. Some are frankly awed by this testament. One freshman from a state long noted for its clean politics murmured, "This certainly is educational."

The final showdown will take place on the Senate floor in three weeks. There are many signs that both Republicans and Democrats, including some from the South, will vote to unseat the gentleman from Mississippi.

# *Capitalism's Happy New Year*

BY ROBERT S. LYND

CRITICS of capitalism have long maintained that its acquisitive anarchy has proved too inefficient and too socially reckless to serve as a stable base on which to build a democratic nation's welfare. They claim, moreover, that these elements of instability are becoming rapidly more destructive with the growth of giant technology and the resulting need for coordination of the entire economic system.

But a reigning system of power sits heavily upon men's imaginations and creates its own defenses against the assaults of fact. Critics of capitalism therefore have been faced with the difficulty: Granted that there is "a deal of ruin" in a deeply rooted system like capitalism, how much evidence of its failure is necessary to refute its pretensions to permanence and superiority? And in this undefined situation how can those who dominate the system be compelled to assume unequivocal responsibility for delivering or failing to deliver specified results? That is, how can they be made to accept the conditions of a crucial test?

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Such a test has now been publicly and collectively accepted by the American business system. When organized big business, led by its top strategy board, the National Association of Manufacturers, killed the OPA, it inaugurated Operation Capitalism. Acting and speaking through the N. A. M., big business shouldered aside the efforts of democratic government to control the economy and announced that it would itself do whatever was necessary for the public good and do it better than could any other system—particularly any kind of government planning or control. The November elections confirmed the power of big business to do the job in its own way, free from government interference.

The N. A. M.'s fifty-first annual Congress of Amer-

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ican Industry held in New York earlier this month was a prolonged roar of triumph. The congress told the world that American organized business "knows what it wants to do, where it is going, and how to get there," and that its broad, closely articulated program is "designed to carry heavy loads in the days to come." Having learned that a policy of "mere opposition" is inadequate to prevent the New Deal type of legislation, business says that it is now going to "stick its neck out" and provide the necessary "practical leadership." Brandishing the big stick of its power, it herds all of us into the fold. Even labor, it says, "is hungry for truth, hungry for leadership—so hungry it will follow anybody who comes along, in the absence of the honest leadership industry should provide."

The program business offers holds "the individual free-enterprise system" and "the welfare of the nation" to be indivisible. It proposes the restoration of a "voluntary economy" and, thereby, "the resumption of economic progress in America." We are promised "A Better Tomorrow for Everybody." For the N. A. M. pledges that "the great majority of American manufacturers are determined to produce as much as they can, as fast as they can, to sell at the lowest possible prices, and [as the result] America will enter the period of prosperity that everyone has been hoping for."

These are broad promises to a desperately insecure nation at a time when, as Anne O'Hare McCormick has said, "the tensions in this country are greater than they were in the depths of the depression of the last decade." They are intended to persuade the public to trust private business rather than a democratic government to take whatever measures may be necessary to secure our economic future. Any plan to insure a decent economic future for all Americans necessarily engages to bring about an immediate end of inflation; avoidance of a postwar depression; full employment, a stabilized high-level national income, and inclusive social security; more democracy not less; peace—not a balance-of-power, spheres-of-influence truce, but *peace*.

Why has business let itself be collectively committed to this thumping test? Large promises have often been made in the past by individual capitalists. Today it is the "party line" of the whole dominant front of American industry to which we are listening. The reason business has let itself in for Operation Capitalism is that the power struggle has reached the stage of in-fighting in which options are curtailed and the effort must be all-out. Business's hand is being forced by damage both to its prestige and to its ideological defenses. The depression of 1929 hurt capitalism as nothing ever had before in this country, hurt it in a way that is crucial in a democracy, by undermining public esteem for its capacity and for the reliability of its promises. The helplessness of business at that time and the enforced extensive participation of government in making our economy work built up a lively popular awareness that the government can do things about people's needs that business can't do.

The outer ring of business's ideological defenses has been breached by the emergence in full, successful operation elsewhere in the world of national planning, and particularly of socialist planning on a continental basis. This makes it impossible for business men any longer to scorn all criticism on the ground that there exists no competitor to capitalism outside the heads of utopian reformers. The inner citadel, too, is threatened by the logic of modern technology and managerial skills, which points away from the small separate operating unit characteristic of the private-enterprise system; in an economy dominated by diversified corporate giants like du Pont, the distinction between "private" and "public" diminishes. To the extent that big private business must look to government for secured profits, subsidies, and relief for its unemployed, its position is further weakened.

Pressures like these have forced big business into a continuous offensive. The results are seen in the growth of the N. A. M.-type of organization and policy-making since 1933 and the recent collective assumption of responsibility for Operation Capitalism.

Where does the intellectual "left" stand as regards all this? It has good grounds for suspecting that business cannot make good on its promises. What is called for is a broad, coherent policy dominated by the public interest as democratically defined, and this is precisely what capitalism has not been able to achieve; it did not even achieve it in a national emergency program like the NRA. The trouble is not that business men as a class are "wicked," "greedy," or "irresponsible," but that the dynamic system in which their lives are enmeshed and which determines their actions is not set up to serve collective democratic ends. It "works" only when men act as if they were greedy and socially irresponsible, engaged in a Hobbesian warfare of each against all.

The task business has taken upon itself is being pictured as a holy crusade. The "private-enterprise system" is identified in this campaign with democracy and all other convenient values. It is because the intellectual left does not confuse capitalism with democracy or planning with dictatorship that it must not allow itself to be drawn into this crusade. Nor must it simply sit it out, ticking off the score of capitalism's failure. The left has a two-fold task: (1) to identify and publicize the obligations American capitalism has undertaken and the tactics to which it will resort as it fails to achieve the promised stability; (2) to chart an alternative course, for lack of which the failure of business's plans may land us in fascism by default.

Because American capitalism has powerful ideological

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and material tools with which to manipulate the American people if its business-as-usual strategy should fail, it is likely to adopt the following tactics:

1. Deny that it ever committed itself to certain objectives recently announced. From this it will be easy to slip over into implying that these objectives are unobtainable anyway, and that capitalism will bring us closer to them than we could get in any other way. A prime example of this tactic was business's precipitate abandonment of the concept of "full employment" on discovering that it depended on greater concessions than business was prepared to make. First the Committee for Economic Development turned thumbs down on "full employment" and set up a vaguer target, and then business saw to it that the United States led the successful fight in the United Nations to eliminate this dangerous goal as a commitment on the signatory nations.

2. Shift the responsibility for failure to others. This device is already in use in the drive to blame organized labor and the Soviet Union, respectively, for our domestic and international muddling in these first post-war years. Responsibility for the failure of veterans' housing is being shifted from the housing industry to the Democratic Administration; inflation is attributed to labor's wage demands; and we shall shortly hear that the drive for expanded world trade failed because the Soviet Union and countries in its sphere of influence refused to join the international trade agencies.

3. Cut beneath the whole level of concrete failures and redefine the issues. Instead of the pursuit of specific objectives—such as low prices, no depression, full employment, and peace—emphasis will be placed on the "vastly more fundamental" struggle for democracy against some inclusive bogy variously called collectivism, totalitarianism, or communism. The groundwork has already been laid for this by the current propaganda identifying the free-enterprise system with democracy, national planning with dictatorship, and so on.

4. Suspend specific democratic procedures because of the need to "restore law and order" and "save the American way of life." Such action has already been noted at the local grass-roots level in the methods of the Associated Farmers, the Mohawk Valley Formula, and similar drives to enlist local sympathies in support of anti-democratic power tactics. The logical next step is to mount such programs on a national scale.

5. Move into that amalgamation of big business and the state which we call fascism. This will be the pay-off on the present business clamor for the cessation of all government interference and the restoration of our freedoms. Nobody knows better than business the "freedoms" obtainable through government controls—of the right sort. One of the things to watch is the use of emergency powers on a national scale. An example of this is the increasingly anomalous prolongation of the Selective Service Act and the Smith-Connally Act, as convenient weapons for the control of labor. And it is but a step from these war powers to equally convenient peace-time powers, if an economic emergency is declared to exist. We shall probably see an intensification of present hindrances to the organization of third parties. In short, in fascism big economic power gains unchallenged authority to use public powers to achieve its own private version of what the nation needs. This is where the N. A. M.'s knowledge of "what it wants to do, where it is going, and how to get there" comes in.

6. Launch, if necessary, another world war to obliterate capitalism's failures. At present big business does not want another war and will settle for controls over labor and over any future New Deal tendencies. War hurts capitalism as a system by introducing government participation in financing, production, and marketing, by speeding up the monopoly tendency, and by encouraging big capital to diversify into the established commodity lines of smaller enterprisers. But war does not affect all sections of capitalist society equally; and as Brailsford pointed out a generation ago and as the balance sheet of this last war reveals, war can be vastly profitable to those powerful enough to be on the inside in the running of it.

To identify these tactics as they occur and to point out their common origin is the responsibility of the left. Also, now that business has accepted, on the barrel, the obligation to provide permanent and stable prosperity, the left must keep the score. And when the score shows—as it almost certainly will—failures heaping up into disaster, the left must be ready with an alternative program. If, as I expect, a liberal compromise between modern monopoly capitalism and socialism is found to be no longer possible, the program must point the way to American socialism.

The American intellectual left is ill organized for such a staggering responsibility. The grip of business and of conservative research foundations all but strangles independent critical thought in the social sciences in the United States. The British Labor Party has evolved from fifty years of organization, public discussion, and research on the left. In this country we have no such continuous tradition of Socialist dissent and inquiry as a basis for left programs. Brookings Institutions and Rockefeller Foundations do not do Fabian Society thinking. Our intellectuals generally are afraid to be thought "radical." Even labor in our as yet timid trade-union research departments is immersed almost entirely in immediate "service research." But no one in touch with American university graduate students can be unaware of the restless demand in this younger generation of social scientists for a chance to think without a bit in their teeth. It is labor and this younger intellectual group that must build a democratic program for America.

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# Winter Season in Moscow

BY ALEXANDER WERTH

*Moscow, December 19*

WINTER has set in—with a severe frost but so far with little snow. If the snow continues light, winter crops may suffer. Christmas trees, or rather New Year's trees, have begun to arrive in the markets, also large boxes of tangerines from the south for the school children's New Year parties.

With the General Assembly and the Foreign Ministers' Conference ended, the average Russian feels that the international atmosphere is a good deal better than it was six or even three months ago. He is convinced that even if there are a few more very sticky patches ahead, especially during the discussion of the German problem, some compromise will be reached. In two years, perhaps sooner, the world will have settled down to some sort of reasonable *modus vivendi*.

The Russians have stated clearly their minimum security demands, by which they will stand, but no people are in a less belligerent mood. This accounts for Russia's decision to treat the Teheran-Azerbaijan conflict for the present as though it were a purely internal Iranian matter. No vital Soviet interests—such as the ratification by the Majlis of the Russian oil-concession agreement—are thought to be endangered. The terror against the Azerbaijanis is reported briefly in the Soviet press, but it is not made a major issue.

Unquestionably Moscow is gratified by the successful conclusion of the Foreign Ministers' discussions on the five peace treaties. Throughout these laborious talks the Russians were never willing to admit the possibility of a complete deadlock or breakdown; it was really, they say, a case of all parties concerned trying to get the best possible terms. Finally everybody consented to make certain concessions compatible with his fundamental interests, and so agreement was reached. In Paris there were moments of real danger because the Russians were convinced that a very unfair system of ganging up against them was being organized. At the subsequent meeting of the Foreign Ministers the Soviet delegation showed a willingness to make concessions in a spirit of give and take, but refused to be bullied into anything by "voting tricks." The agreements reached, it is hoped, will prepare the way for settlement of the admittedly more difficult problems of Germany and Austria.

It is also hoped that not too many *faits accomplis* will have been recognized in western Germany before the Foreign Ministers meet in Moscow on March 10. Prominence was given in yesterday's press to the statement by Premier Friedrichs of Saxony to the effect that "German unity" and the preservation of the bloc of anti-fascist parties must be the people's two principal aims. Excessive autonomy is considered dangerous, since a more or less independent state like Bavaria might shelter a budding Nazi movement, as Thuringia did before 1933.

About the work of the United Nations proper, feelings are rather more mixed. An altogether exceptional amount of space was given to the U. N. deliberations in the Soviet press; sometimes almost three-quarters of the newspapers were devoted to reports from New York—three closely packed pages out of four. All this was read, and read thoroughly, by millions of people. The impression in Russia is very strong that the Soviet delegation was able to leave New York with a completely clear conscience and that Russia is by far the staunchest supporter of the U. N. and of all good causes. The Soviet delegation appears as the main champion of world opinion against Franco Spain, as the leader in the struggle against racial discrimination—witness South Africa's defeat—as the strongest supporter of a continuation of UNRRA in some form, and above all as the most sincere advocate of disarmament.

It is clear to the Russian reader that it was not the Soviet delegation's fault if the question of the troop census, raised by the Russians and enlarged by the Americans, has been buried for the present. With respect to the veto, the Russians are satisfied that the U. N. meeting clearly demonstrated that none of the big powers want it scrapped; the "nebulous" recommendation to the Security Council on its future use they regard as only a minor concession to its critics. This enormous buildup of the United Nations by the Russians is an extremely significant development.

Concerning relations with Britain and America a number of little things may be mentioned. There has been some criticism about Egypt, some annoyance over the merging of the British and American zones in Germany, a ferocious Zaslavsky article on Schumacher's visit to England, annoyance over "the campaign in the British press against the Potsdam agreements," which, in the words of one commentator, "would, if scrapped, lead to

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the rebirth of German nationalism, as Schumacher and his Nazi cronies want." And, finally, Zilliacus is prominently quoted as denouncing the "secret Anglo-American union" and arms standardization. The pooling of food reserves in Austria is considered by many a promising sign that something similar may be agreed upon for Germany. The desire to create better relations with America is also evident—for example, in the references in Vishinsky's recent speech to the desirability of developing Soviet-American trade and his remark that credits to Russia are a good investment. Regarding trade with Britain, the prospects are still very uncertain. The Amalgamated Engineering Union's delegation, during its three weeks' visit to Russia, hoped to have conversations on the subject with the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade, but the meetings did not materialize.

Internally there are no startling developments. The stimulation of retail trade by the new functions given to the cooperatives under the November 9 decree has so far made little progress: only two shops and fifteen stalls have been opened in Moscow during the past month. The press declares that such results are totally unsatisfactory and assures the cooperatives that their new role in retail trade is not a temporary expedient, that they can confidently go ahead. It declares that they have "an immense role to play."

The tightening up of discipline is proceeding everywhere. The other day Mihailov, general secretary of the All-Union Komsomol, made an eloquent speech at Kiev on the duty of the Ukrainian Komsomols to increase production and efficiency. He said that in liberated Ukraine 70 per cent of the Komsomol members were of less than two years' standing, which naturally explains the ineffectiveness of many of them.

The labor shortage is indisputable, as was observed by the British union delegation, which last week visited the Donbas. Restoration is proceeding, but the destruction was so great that progress appears slow. The other day it was reported that the immense agricultural-machinery plant, Rostselmach, at Rostov had been repaired only 46 per cent. Some industrial sectors are certainly lagging. When I visited Rostselmach last summer I found that much of the work still consisted in clearing away rubble, and for lack of Russian workers the somewhat unproductive and ca-canny labor of German prisoners was used. However, Jack Tanner, leader of the visiting trade-union delegation, spoke very highly of the training schemes for apprentices in all plants, and he was certain that in a few years the difficulties caused by the shortage of labor would be overcome.

To fight crime heavier sentences are being passed on bandits and burglars. In Moscow a man named Gromov was sentenced to death for robbing passersby at night in the street, after threatening and in some cases wounding them with a knife.

On the "literary" front," there is little new. The indiscriminate ragging of writers by critics is being frowned upon. Writers are now told that they need not fear being bothered by petty criticisms. Occasionally some sharp remarks appear, however. The most popular writer of children's verse, Kornei Chukovsky, was attacked in the Central Committee's paper, *Culture and Life,* for his story "The Kingdom of Dogs." It is the story of an imaginary dogs' kingdom in which the canine king, wearing a golden crown, passes judgment on naughty boys who torment dogs. The critic objected to such "zoological morality" being preached to Soviet children.

A play which has just been announced and which has created some excitement is Simonov's "The Russian Question," the result of his recent visit to America. It dramatizes the conflict between a democratic, fair-minded young American journalist and a villainous newspaper proprietor. The whole thing is represented as a struggle between two sharply defined sets of ideas: peace lovers against warmongers; democracy, anti-fascism, fairness to the Soviet Union against the plans for an anti-Soviet crusade; the democratic spirit against the vicious warmongering press monopolies. The attitude toward the Soviet Union becomes in Simonov's play a sort of ultimate test of human decency and the "true democratic spirit in the present-day world." Simonov may not be a great or even a good writer, but he is important because what he writes nearly always reflects the thing foremost in the minds of most Russians. There is no doubt that the question of future Soviet-American relations is now of great concern.

Russian music remains one of the most fruitful creative fields. Here one has the sensation of living in something approaching a great creative epoch. One waits with excitement for outstanding and lasting works to appear. In the past few weeks alone Moscow has heard the first performance of works some of which may be put in that category, as Shostakovich's new quartet, whose finale has more purely musical loveliness than almost anything he has written, and loveliness is not a word usually applied to him. No less important is Prokofiev's new violin sonata, with exquisite strings and inexhaustible inventiveness of melody and rhythm. Most typical of Prokofiev's work is the scherzo with its touch of "hooligan swagger," reminiscent of the remarkable scherzo of the Fifth Symphony. On a different level is Khachaturian's new cello concerto, which suffers from an excess of old tricks of string concertos. If Khachaturian's music is almost too consistently "Armenian," the well-known Georgian composer, Balanchevadze, is apt to go to the other extreme. His new piano concerto is, with the exception of rare passages, disappointingly un-Georgian.

But with Prokofiev and Shostakovich intensely active, Moscow remains musically one of the most exciting places in the world.

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# Homeless America

BY CHARLES ABRAMS

## II. Bailing Out the Builders

THE fight against the emergency housing program threatens to become the greatest assault upon government resources since the dissipation of the federal domain. A powerful lobby stands mobilized to rewrite the formula for house building so that builders and lenders will get the profits without taking the risks while the government will take the risks without getting the profits. If the lobby succeeds, housing may become the opening wedge for the socialization of losses in business.

The implications of the present fight will be better understood if its background is briefly reviewed. Up to the turn of the century a home owner would have welcomed a mortgage on his house no more warmly than a swarm of termites into its beams. The early movies depicting the mortgagee as a mustachioed villain threatening to foreclose unless he received the hand of the owner's daughter in marriage represented the prevailing view. But building costs rose, curtailing home buying; whereupon the mortgage lending institutions, perceiving a new outlet for their mounting reserves at lucrative interest rates, provided the additional means needed. Between 1922 and 1929, though the total value of urban real estate rose only 14 per cent and national wealth 20 per cent, urban mortgage debt increased 208 per cent.

Until the depression the mortgage system continued unchanged, the builder taking the risks in home building and the mortgage company putting up about two-thirds of the cost. When the crash came, foreclosures wiped out home equities at the rate of a thousand a day. Mortgage financing stopped; building fell off to a trickle. The Roosevelt Administration saw recovery held back by the lag in home building and set out to resuscitate it with the federal pulmotor. Housing agencies fanned out in all directions. A Federal Housing Administration insured mortgage loans to lending institutions up to 90 per cent of purchase price. A Home Owners' Loan Corporation lifted three billion dollars in mortgages from the bulging portfolios of the depression-shocked lending companies. A Home Loan Bank System, designed to "bring out hoarded savings," insured mortgage loans to building and loan associations, guaranteed their shareholders, authorized the government to buy their stock. A small appropriation was made for an experimental housing program for slum dwellers, and in 1937 an act authorizing the building of about 160,000 low-rent homes passed Congress without objection from real-estate or business interests.

Soon, however, builders and mortgage lenders awoke to the potentialities of government aid. The home builder had been the neglected little brother in the entrepreneurial family. He now saw that the 90 per cent insured mortgage allowed him to bail out with his investment while at the same time the small down payment enticed thousands of new recruits into home ownership. The mortgage lending institutions had formerly been obliged to take the risks of over-appraisal and devaluation. Now the government provided them with a method of absorbing their risks without affecting their gains. The builders and lenders rose to the occasion with all the lobbying strength they could muster. Adopting the prevailing idiom of social reform, they advocated more federal intervention than housing idealists ever dreamed of.

But while favoring social reforms noble enough on the surface, the lobby revealed its more practical ideas. Its plans called for (a) underwriting by government of the security of speculative investment in real estate; (b) the assurance of continuing profits to the nominal owners of rented property by rent-relief payments to low-income workers, which would then be handed over as rent to private owners; (c) the continuance and expansion of the FHA and the Home Loan Bank, under which preferred institutions could continue to exact exorbitant interest from home buyers without restraint; (d) the unleashing of another home-purchasing boom from which builders might profit without risk, while veterans and others were impressed into purchasing precarious equities without check by the government; (e) the cancelation of all priorities on materials, construction, sales prices, and rents of new housing. In short, the New Deal was to be reshuffled, with the cards stacked against the taxpayer and home owner.

The reasons why an important sector of business abandoned its traditional opposition to government interven-

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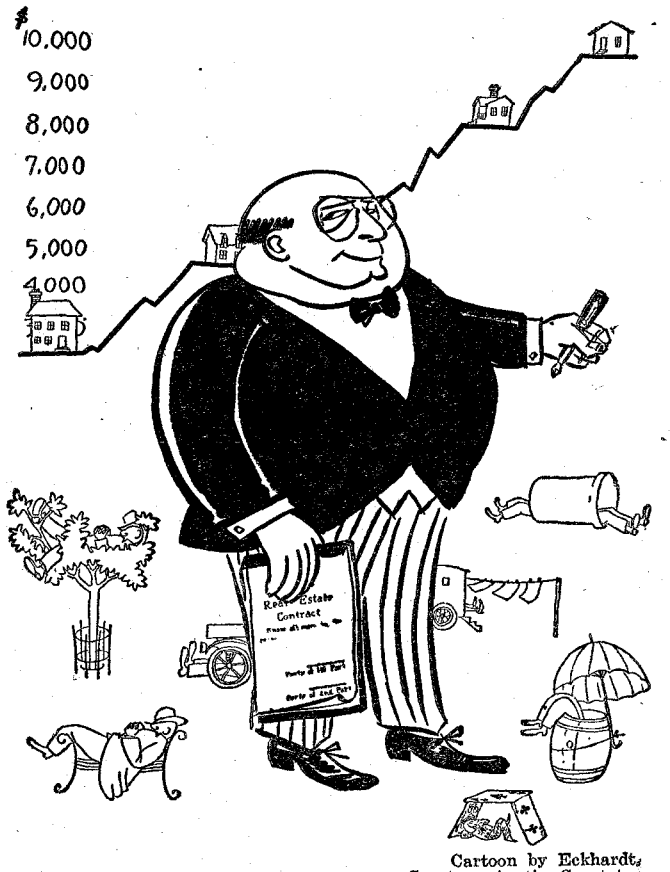
tion will become clear if we examine the operations of the mortgage-insuring agencies. FHA insurance of mortgage loans has not forced the lenders to make any appreciable cut in the interest rate; in fact, uninsured mortgage loans often carry a lower interest rate than those insured by the government. On government-insured repair loans interest is 9 per cent! Insured loans are parceled out to preferred lending institutions only. Competition that might stimulate interest reduction is stifled with the government's blessing. Practices which in other enterprises would be clamped down on as brazen violations of the anti-trust act are openly countenanced. Even the practice of excluding persons of unwelcome color or ancestry has been approved in FHA publications.

The Home Loan Bank System, too, was balm to the ailing building-and-loan associations. Posing as "cooperatives," these were little more than mortgage-lending *banking* institutions with self-perpetuating directorates. Before 1933 they had to take normal business risks in their mortgage loans. Now they could not only buy government-insured mortgages, but the government underwrote the investments of their depositors and shareholders. It discounted their mortgages for a premium of about 1½ per cent, while the associations were free to charge 5½ per cent and up. The resources of these institutions more than doubled in a few years.

When the war ended and the need for veterans' housing became pressing, Congress again rushed through a law designed to induce veterans to buy whether they could afford to carry the property or not. The need for any down payment was now eliminated. Again the government simply insured the lenders and underwrote their risks, without providing any security for the home-hungry veterans. The program was merely fresh evidence of the desire to get more deeds into the hands of citizens without regard for the aftermath. Low costs, ability to pay, decent standards, reasonable interest rates, sound city planning—all these were thrust into the background.




Cartoon by Eckhardt, Courtesy Austin Spectator

*"The housing shortage will take care of itself as soon as materials get back on the market."*

It is plain, therefore, that the benefits reaped by private building interests from government aid are the source of the present intense opposition to public housing. The prospect that the vast credits and funds of the government may be used for publicly sponsored undertakings is a powerful threat to the subsidization of private enterprise. Public housing agencies build as economically as the private builder. Instead of bailing out slum owners they have often bought vacant land for their projects. Bonds of local housing authorities, to the distaste of the mortgage lenders, have been sold competitively to underwriting houses at one-third the rate of yield the institutional lenders exact on FHA mortgages.

It is not surprising that in the line-up against the public-housing provisions of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill are the home builders, the American Bankers' Association, the United States Savings and Loan League, 208 life-insurance companies, the Mortgage Bankers' Association of America, and the National Savings and Loan League. Herbert U. Nelson, arch-deacon of the lobby, put the issue plainly: "In our country we prefer that government activity shall take the form of assisting and aiding private business rather than undertaking great public projects of a governmental character." A Republican bloc in the House Banking and Currency Committee kept this bill from coming on the floor for a vote. President Truman's recent announcement of more mortgage insurance and less restriction on the home builder, and his appointment of the FHA administrator as boss of the government's housing program suggest that the Administration is now ready to capitulate to the lobby.

The only real opposition to the attempted raid on the federal treasury comes from the 800 housing authorities set up in forty of the forty-eight states. The members of these authorities are unpaid citizens, 75 per cent of them from business, banking, and the professions. They are backed by labor, civic organizations, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Veterans' Committee.

The main issue is not whether there shall be public or private housing but whether the public or the private entrepreneur shall receive the benefit of government moneys and credit. The Washington real-estate lobby is fighting to divert the funds required for social under-

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takings into private hands and to obtain government credit resources for private use. The struggle is not between those favoring socialization and those opposing it —Senator Robert A. Taft, who is sponsoring the housing bill, can hardly be called a socialist. The struggle is between those who favor the traditional role of government under a private-enterprise system and those who see in federal intercession an opportunity to make government the handmaiden of business.

Once the raid on the public funds has been carried out, the next move may be the appropriation of government powers—in fact, that has already begun. In states that have enacted "urban redevelopment laws" not only have government funds been put at the disposal of big private institutions but government powers have been surrendered to them on the pretext that slums are being cleared. The Stuyvesant Town project of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in New York City has been given the benefit of a special power of eminent domain which authorizes the compulsory purchase of land as a "superior public use." Several public streets in the heart of the metropolis have been turned over to the company forever. Only one official, the city's Comptroller, is permitted access to these streets—and that only for the period of tax exemption. Handing out public moneys and public powers to private companies is now authorized in eleven states.

If the lobby wins its fight, the way may be paved for a remarkable innovation in government. For if business is to be freed of the responsibility, restrictions, and safeguards to which the government agency is subject, the "ism" describing the new era will be of a type more menacing than socialism. Already ominous signs of race discrimination have appeared in Stuyvesant Town.

Why is the public not awake to the danger? Because the housing issue is so complex that the average citizen is not able to distinguish the true substance of housing laws from the nobly worded but meaningless pronouncements of their preambles. Since the recognition of the federal government's welfare power by the Supreme Court the principles governing the use of federal subsidies have never been adequately defined, and each innovation is permitted to serve as a precedent for further raids upon the federal credit. Organizations fighting against the lobby, such as the National Public Housing Conference, are hampered by poverty and public apathy.

Much more than houses is involved in the housing question. The solution may provide the precedents for the type of economy in which we are to live. Housing is no longer an emotional issue to be fought out between those who are against slums and those who are for them. It will be seen in its true focus only when all the essential if wearisome details of a program have been laid before the public.

# *The Last Skyscraper*

BY FREDERICK GUTHEIM

> Here first the duties of today, the lessons of the concrete,
> Wealth, order, travel, shelter, products, plenty;
> As of the building of some varied, vast, perpetual edifice,
> Whence to arise inevitable in time, the towering roofs, the lamps,
> The solid-planted spires tall shooting to the stars.

SO WALT WHITMAN. But this original lover of Mannahatta does not translate too well. Else he might have made some things clear to the delegates to the United Nations Assembly who recently decided to build their headquarters in a dereliot area along the East River. He gives sounder advice than the delegates received from their technical commission of expert planners. Or from the daily papers.

The best thing an editorial writer in the New York *Times* could find to say about this site was that it had plenty of rock under it. On the first page of the *Times* a more objective account noted the abattoirs, warehouses, parking lots, and Dead End kids. But clearly the United Nations are not interested in what they find on the site today. All that can be scraped clean. They are interested in getting down to the virgin rock and deciding what can be built there.

Having accepted, on the recommendation of the United States government and with the cooperation of the city of New York, the East River site offered by John D. Rockefeller, where does the U. N. go from here? The headquarters building must now be planned to accommodate all the U. N.'s many and varied activities. Only a Radio City type of development can fill the bill, a city of skyscrapers. But the U. N. city will stand within a city that already exists, and in one of the worst parts of the city.

What limitations does this impose? The site offers no possibility of expansion; and the U. N., we hope, is to be a growing organization. The site is too small to give much opportunity for an architectural setting, and space

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for many of the supporting services must be provided in the vicinity. But perhaps most important is the lack of what the French call *ambiance*—the lack of a suitable atmosphere, a congenial environment. In our language we have neither the word nor the idea.

The previous owners of this site, who assembled it with the idea of creating another and larger Radio City, appear to have relinquished their plan because the cooperation of the city was necessary not only to enable them to acquire some remaining small segments of property and to preempt space intended for a municipal park but to assure the construction of a loop subway line to the area. Quite a lot more will be expected of the city by the new owners.

In the highly professional report of the Headquarters Commission we find an analysis of the U. N.'s requirements. The housing needs of the U. N. community are set off against a bleak and cheerless summary of New York's housing situation. With 7,000 employees and their dependents, 4,000 transient visitors, and the necessary service population, this community is estimated to total 52,530 persons. On the five and one-half city blocks of the East River site, of course, no such numbers can be accommodated. The employees of the U. N., 40 per cent of whom earn less than $2,500 per year, will be fortunate if any housing is provided for them on or off the site, and the U. N. must begin to count on a permanent upward revision of the quota of American nationals it employs. The eighteen acres of land along the East River will meet only the barest requirements of the United Nations.

The General Assembly must have a hall seating 1,000 persons with space for 3,000 more in balconies; it must also have seven large committee rooms accommodating 400 persons, and ten smaller rooms for 30 to 100 persons. The Security Council will need its own chamber for 200, with space for 2,000 in balconies, and with seven large and two or more small committee rooms. The Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council will share a third hall seating 175, with 500 in the balconies, two large committee rooms, and five small ones. Nine specialized international agencies working closely with the U. N. will have staffs totaling 2,500, for which room must be provided. An estimated seventy permanent missions will have staffs totaling 1,875 persons.

Offices for the secretariat itself form of course the largest item. These will require 1,675,000 square feet. Two small halls for lectures, films, and so on will require 15,000 square feet each. A library of a million volumes, various restaurants, bars, and lounges, and radio and communication facilities complete the main features of the plan.

With Radio City in mind one need not doubt that this array of buildings can be erected on the chosen site. Some may even find encouragement in the fact that buildings so like their model will have a high degree of convertibility and a good resale value. Should the U. N. disintegrate, or be replaced by another and more effective form of world government, no embarrassing monument like that at Geneva need stand empty to remind us of our failure to create the Parliament of Man.

Whether New York City can bring about a sufficient measure of urban redevelopment to justify the U. N.'s gamble with this site is an open question. Few city planners will take a cheerful view of the possibility. New York real estate, particularly in Manhattan, is very sick. Despite the current false health of post-war conditions, it suffers from a chronic disease caused by the widespread movement toward metropolitan decentralization and over-inflated realty values. U. N. delegates, most of whom come from cities a good deal smaller than Buffalo, whose administrations have a large measure of control over land, may be forgiven for miscalculating the importance of this factor. But our own representatives have a heavy responsibility. It is too early to say that we have sold the U. N. a gold brick. But it is beginning to look that way.

Robert Moses apparently believes the U. N. will be satisfied if he rezones a fringe a block wide around the site. He can also be prevailed on, as a disciple of Baron Haussmann, to plan some monumental approaches to the U. N. headquarters. But corridor streets and pretty façades are not enough. More comprehensive planning, more municipal land ownership, and more directly controlled building plans are called for.

Fifteen years have passed since the last skyscraper of any consequence was built. The U. N. skyscrapers will undoubtedly be the last we shall erect.

In what now seems an ironic proposal Lewis Mumford, our most distinguished student of architecture and city planning, recommended last summer that the United Nations select some portion of a great metropolis and redevelop it as an example for war-shattered cities. The distinguished French technical representative on the Headquarters Commission, M. Le Corbusier, has boldly championed the idea of the "vertical garden city"—a skyscraper solution to the U. N.'s site problem. Are these brave conceptions to be mocked?

In constructing the thousand-foot skyscrapers of U. N. the technical abilities of American architects and engineers will be put to the test. Building technicians of other nations cannot seriously compete in manipulating this essentially American building form. No other engineers are qualified by training or experience to deal with the complex questions of heating, ventilating, air conditioning, elevators, escalators, and the myriad mechanical devices that make the skyscraper possible. The only architectural expression admissible will be a tight and economical functionalism not materially different from the rent barracks of Manhattan. The possibility of

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an international architectural competition is an absurdity.

Since American architects will inevitably determine the form of the buildings, the U. N. Headquarters Commission might be well advised to place the design problem in the hands of the Public Buildings Administration. The recently retired supervising architect of the PBA, George Howe of Philadelphia, is admirably qualified for this task by his experience in designing for the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society a skyscraper more modern than any in New York. Or the PBA might make use of the experience of New York's outstanding exponent of skyscraper design, Wallace K. Harrison, codesigner of Radio City, who has for months been at work on the development of this very East River area for Webb and Knapp. With such designers, and a determined effort on the part of the New York City Planning Commission, it may yet be possible to erect on this most difficult and unpromising site a building that can speak to the world.

# "The Republic of India"

BY SHIVA RAO

*New Delhi, December 17*

IN MANY ways it has been a memorable fortnight, crowded with big events—the opening of the Constituent Assembly in New Delhi, Nehru's magnificent speech outlining its objectives, and the parliamentary debate on India in London.

Nehru returned from his dramatic flight to London disappointed but not embittered. "We hungered for a message of cheer and cooperation from Britain," he said, addressing the Constituent Assembly, "and it has been a blow to me that obstructions and new limitations not mentioned previously have been placed before us." "It hurts," he added simply. America, Australia, and China sent messages of good-will which the chairman read out on the opening day, but none came from Britain.

Nehru touched a deep chord when he spoke of the five thousand years of India's past that seemed to be crowding round him. "I feel overwhelmed by the mightiness of the task," he said in a voice shaken with emotion. The absence of the Moslem League's seventy-five representatives he noted with regret and expressed the hope they would take their places soon, because India's future, as he visualized it, was not confined to any group or party: "The welfare of four hundred million people is our common concern." In a passionate appeal "for imaginative daring" on the part of the British government, he declared that he challenged no one's *bona fides* and would continue to seek Britain's cooperation.

He repeated these sentiments yesterday and today in addresses before Benares University and the annual gathering of British business men at Calcutta. Let's forget Britain's past misdeeds, he pleaded; India cannot afford to cut all its visible and invisible connections with Britain of the past 150 years. He warned, however, that future Indo-British relations would depend on Britain's policy and conduct toward India.

The Constituent Assembly is considering as its first real item of business Nehru's resolution outlining what should be the basic features of the permanent constitution. India, according to this conception, will become an independent sovereign republic comprising all British India, the Indian princes' territories, scattered possessions under French or Portuguese administration, and possibly, if they desire it, regions like Burma and Ceylon. The constitution will guarantee social, economic, and political justice to all citizens and provide adequate safeguards for minorities, backward classes, and the untouchables. Certain definite powers and functions will be assigned to the central government by federated autonomous units which will exercise all residual authority.

The present deliberations of the Constituent Assembly are held in an atmosphere of great uncertainty. Until Jinnah returns from London and summons the executive of the Moslem League to reconsider its boycott, one cannot say whether or not the League's representatives will participate in the Assembly. Jinnah wants definite assurance from the Congress leaders that they accept without reservations the British Cabinet's long-term plans. The Congress leaders will recommend that certain disputed passages be referred to the federal court.

Equally unpredictable is the attitude of the princes. Many among them seem frightened by the term "independent sovereign republic" and the assertion that sovereignty even in constituent units is derived from the people. The British Cabinet has urged a negotiating committee of the princes or their prime ministers.

Thus at the moment the Constituent Assembly represents only British India, not the princes' territories—and not even the whole of British India, since the Moslem League is not participating. Churchill, in the course of the parliamentary debate, offensively raised the question whether such an Assembly was competent to make decisions affecting the whole of India. The Labor Cabinet

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would not answer the question directly. It indorsed Jinnah's interpretation of its long-term plan and asked the Congress leaders to accept it, adding the important reservation that the British government cannot impose on unwilling parts of the country a constitution framed by an Assembly from which a section of the people has held aloof.

This statement has set many minds thinking. The Moslems believe it implies that provinces with Moslem majorities need not accept a constitution framed in their absence. The princes find the principle applicable to their territories unless they reach an agreement with the Constituent Assembly with regard to representation. By the simple process of abstention the Moslems and the princes believe they can compel the present Constituent Assembly to limit its attention to six provinces. Congress leaders will make every reasonable concession to obtain the cooperation of the Moslem League and the princes.

One cannot say at this stage how far their efforts will prove successful. Up to now Jinnah has been able to get the support of all members of his party. A section, however, remains critical of his barren and uncompromising policy. Forming a minority of the population in several provinces, the Moslems cannot accept his suggestion to exchange populations as a preliminary to the establishment of Pakistan. They realize they must learn to live on terms of friendliness with their Hindu neighbors. The recent terrible riots have taught both Hindus and Moslems that violence settles no problem.

There is a similar lack of unanimity among the princes. The Hindu and Sikh princes, with some exceptions, would welcome a general settlement with the Congress leaders.

All reactionary elements in India are likely to take heart from Churchill's mischievous utterance predicting widespread strife and chaos. Nehru has promptly answered his point about whether the British troops are to be used to put down Moslems and untouchables. The demand for their immediate withdrawal will be all the more insistent in the future.

The Congress Party has an enormous social program beginning with the abolition of the landlord system and the emancipation of the peasantry. It favors a considerable measure of state control of industry. It seeks the introduction of popular government in the princes' territories. The question is: Does the British Labor government genuinely desire to help the Congress leaders to achieve these great reforms? Parliamentary debates in London a week ago have been most disappointing in this respect. Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander, among the Labor ministers, were apologetic. They seemed to say to the Tories, "We are not doing anything very different from your party's policy." Men like Nehru expected a bold and clear-cut departure from the Churchillian conception of imperialism.

# *In the Wind*

BEAT THE YOLKS of a dozen eggs: "Errors and sophistries," a professor of philosophy of Boston College recently told a group of educators, "are supported by big names whose prestige the devil has carefully built up—names like Russell, Whitehead, Dewey, Kant, Hume, Bergson, Freud, Marx, Einstein, Bridgman, and their like."

ADD ONE CUP of sugar: Institutional advertisement of the State of Mississippi in a recent New York *Times:* "Come to Mississippi! You will find a friendly, cooperative spirit. . . . Bring the family."

ONE PINT of brandy: Recently discovered advertisement in an old issue of *Architectural Forum:* "Wire Your Houses for Electric Ranges! Electric Range is 2-to-1 Choice Among Upper Two-Thirds of White Farmers."

ONE PINT of rye: A Citizens' Committee "to represent public interest" was appointed by Mayor Beach of Oakland, California, during the recent general strike. Its members were the publisher of the local Hearst paper, a political boss, the president of the Oakland Chamber of Commerce, a bank president, a former president of the Oakland Key System bus line, two department-store general managers, and the president of the United Employers of Oakland.

BEAT THE EGG WHITES and fold in: From the leading editorial in the Pittsburgh *Press,* a Scripps-Howard newspaper, on the morning the coal strike ended—"John L. Lewis surrendered. Appropriately enough, it was the fifth anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor."

ADD ONE PINT (86 cents' worth) of whipped cream: "Emotional impact that lingers long," reads an advertisement for a new French movie version of "Carmen." "Passion abundant . . . Lusty as you could wish . . . French dialogue . . . English subtitles . . . Released by Superfilm . . . The Stirring Screenplay of Mérimée's Classical Story . . . starring VIVIANE ROMANCE . . . (Background music by Georges Bizet)."

SPRINKLE WITH NUTMEG: Bobby Sox Smith, a hero of Okinawa from Queens, New York, told a New York *Times* reporter he needed a home. Smith and his wife have been angling for the apartment of Gerhard Eisler, the alleged American Communist leader who is now under investigation by the FBI. Eisler happens to live in the same building as Smith's parents. "But," Smith told the *Times* man, "his wife is still there. Besides, some of the FBI men who've been tailing him want that apartment, too."

CHILL AND SERVE: "Animals in the zoo," says Dr. George M. Uhl, Los Angeles health officer, "have better housing than some of Los Angeles's human residents." Happy New Year!

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind. One dollar will be paid for each item accepted.*]

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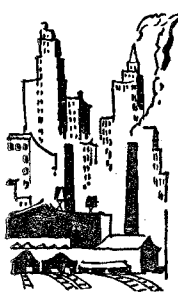

# EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

## "From Portal to Portal"

WE SHALL be hearing this sonorous phrase very frequently during the next few months, for the problem it represents is going to engage the attention of both Congress and the courts and, in addition, is certain to figure in collective bargaining. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Supreme Court has ruled, the forty-hour statutory week must be measured "from portal to portal"—that is to say, from the time a worker enters his employer's premises to the time he leaves. This decision has opened the door to millions of claims for unpaid time worked aggregating billions of dollars.

The act, passed in 1938, provided that hours worked in excess of forty a week must be paid for at time-and-a-half rates. Unfortunately it did not define "compensable time," and most employers assumed that they need not include in the pay period time spent by the worker in getting to his working place after punching the clock, in changing clothes when special garments were required, in cleaning up after work, in returning to the entry at the end of the shift, and in waiting his turn to clock out. In small workshops and factories this span of unproductive time may be of little consequence, but in large modern plants, covering a huge acreage, it can add appreciably to the length of the working day. Moreover, since it is difficult to keep individual records of the exact time when employees actually start work, many employers deduct an arbitrary allowance from the hours clocked. In the Mount Clemens Pottery Company case the Supreme Court noted that the firm calculated compensable time from the succeeding quarter-hour after employees punched a time-clock when going in and from the preceding quarter-hour when going out. "Thus an employee who punches in at 6.46 a. m., punches out at 12.14 p. m., then punches in again at 12.46 p. m., and finally punches out at 4.14 p. m., is credited," said the court, "with having worked the eight hours between 7 a. m. and 12 noon and between 1 p. m. and 4 p. m.—a total of 56 minutes less than the time recorded by the time clocks."

This problem first came before the courts some years ago when a claim was made against the Tennessee Coal Company for payment of time spent in underground travel in iron-ore mines. In 1942 the Supreme Court found for the workers, and three years later, in the Jewell Ridge Coal Corporation case, it concluded that there was no substantial difference between underground travel in iron mines and coal mines. Finally, on June 10, 1946, the court, reversing the decision of a district judge in the Mount Clemens Pottery Company case, held that the "portal to portal" principle applied to industry in general.

This decision has been criticized for the broadness with which it interpreted the intentions of Congress, but it is certainly one that appeals to both equity and common sense. For once a man enters his employer's premises, his time, obviously, is not his own. He cannot control the location of his working place, and if assigned to one ten or fifteen minutes distant from the gate he should be compensated for the time spent in reaching it. Equally, if the nature of his work requires the wearing of special clothing, he should be paid for the minutes spent changing. To a considerable extent the amount of non-productive time in a factory is under the control of employers. They can arrange in a big plant for more entries so that internal walking is minimized, can instal more time-clocks and reduce waiting to punch in and out. According to *Business Action*, organ of the United States Chamber of Commerce, many firms are planning just such improvements now that the Mount Clemens decision has given them an incentive to do so. When unproductive time represented merely a loss to workers, the additional investment involved was not, it seems, justified.

Employers are now looking to Congress for some relief from the burden of retroactive claims which the court's findings threaten to place upon them. In the years since 1939 a great many industrial workers have been putting in more than forty hours a week and so are entitled to payment at overtime rates for any uncompensated time worked; moreover, the act provides for additional damages equal to the amount due. It is alleged that many small firms would be bankrupted and even the strongest would find their financial position seriously damaged. The government also would probably be called upon to make very large reimbursements to cost-plus war contractors—an estimate of five billion dollars has been published—and would be deluged with claims for tax refunds. Possibly the extent of the Treasury's liability has been exaggerated for propaganda purposes, but the scale of the sums involved is illustrated by suits against two of United States Steel's many subsidiaries asking for $120,000,000.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that state statutes of limitations vary in their incidence. Thus in Wyoming a worker can seek recovery of sums due over an eight-year period, while in Colorado there is retroactive liability for only one year. Such variations in standards confer competitive advantages on violators of the law in many states.

Yet another problem is created by the fact that the courts have held waivers of individual claims under the Fair Labor Standards Act to be inadmissible. Consequently a settlement of retroactive claims negotiated between an employer and a union cannot be regarded as binding. Yet the filing of millions of individual claims could choke the courts for years.

Clearly, some kind of legislation to tidy up the whole situation is required. But a bill which was introduced last session by Representative Gwynne of Iowa and is likely to be revived early next year certainly goes too far. It provides for a maximum of two years' liability for back pay, not only in the case of "portal to portal" claims, but in other damage suits under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Thus it would benefit employers who had deliberately cheated their workers as well as those who may fairly claim to have sinned inadvertently by continuing customary practices. Labor organizations will have to be vigilant lest, under cover of meeting an extraordinary situation, an effort is made to weaken the Fair Labor Standards Act.

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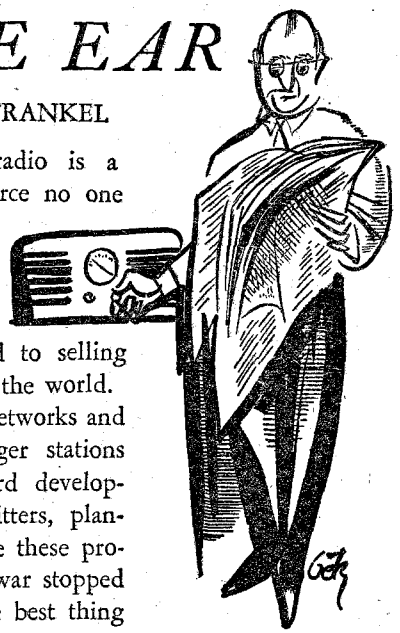
# *IN ONE EAR*

BY LOU FRANKEL



THAT American radio is a powerful sales force no one can deny in the face of its continuing successes. Yet United States broadcasters have never got around to selling America to the rest of the world.

Before the war the networks and a handful of the larger stations took some steps toward developing short-wave transmitters, planning eventually to have these programs sponsored. The war stopped all that, and about the best thing accomplished was the loose affiliation of American networks with similar though inferior organizations in Latin America. Today the short-wave transmitters are leased by the government, the hookups between networks here and those south of the border are dormant, the only radio word from the United States comes through the recently inaugurated short-wave broadcasts of the State Department, and the best job of selling these United States is being done by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

BBC broadcasts are fitted for this job by a basic difference in approach. The primary purpose of the American broadcaster is to get more listeners for the advertiser; he feels no obligation to extol the virtues of his country to the world. The BBC's overseas service, which was organized in 1935 to combat the short-wave radio propaganda of Germany and Italy, started with this premise: "There's no use trying to sell England to the world unless England understands the world." To help England to understand the United States the BBC has from the very beginning had a production staff here to feed what it calls "the eastbound service," from the United States to England. And always it has tried to produce shows that would tell each country about the other.

In the beginning the BBC sent its programs over here by short wave. Then surveys showed that it was reaching less than half of one per cent of the available listeners and that most of these were either short-wave addicts or Englishmen away from home. So it changed its methods and got American stations to rebroadcast its programs. The war played into its hands, for most of the non-network radio correspondents who went to Europe found the army transmission facilities inadequate and turned to the BBC to get their broadcasts home. Moreover, rebroadcasts of the BBC's short-waved newscasts, documentaries, and features enabled many a non-network station to cover the war.

Today, because it is short of dollars, the BBC has had to curtail its eastbound production staff, but it has come up with a technique of exchange programs that has actually increased the number of programs being sent out. Of the "eastbound shows" the following are typical:

"American Commentary," a weekly commentary on the United States by an American. Raymond Gram Swing started the series in 1935. He was succeeded by Elmer Davis and Alastair Cooke. Currently Joe Harsch of CBS and Clifton Utley of WMAQ are performing.

"American Letter," a weekly broadcast by Alastair Cooke on anything interesting or significant in American life or thought. Mr. Cooke has described life in a New England town, discussed the economic problems of the South, and attempted to explain the average American.

"Transatlantic Quiz," a weekly ad-lib show in which questions are asked on one side of the Atlantic and answered on the other. It tries to find out which panel knows most about the other's country. On this side the speakers have been Christopher Morley and John Mason Brown; in London, Denis Brogan, a professor of political science, and David Niven, the actor.

Among the "exchange" programs, the following have been heard recently:

"Birmingham to Birmingham," in which the people of the two cities learned about each other. WAPI in Birmingham, Alabama, put together a program that included interviews with typical residents, descriptions of the town, on-the-spot accounts of a steel mill and coal mine, and the like.

"Columbus to Manchester." In this the underlying theme was cotton. WDAK in Columbus, Georgia, did a program about the growing, ginning, and selling of cotton. Manchester presented a show about its cotton mills.

WLW-BBC compared a Welsh settlement in Ohio with the town in Wales that the settlers originally came from.

WGY-BBC have a monthly program on farming. A topic is chosen, and questions are submitted by farmers within range of WGY in Schenectady, New York, and the BBC Scottish service; then each side brings farmers and experts to the mike to answer the questions.

KDKA-BBC offers a monthly exchange between youngsters in Pittsburgh and their counterparts in the Midlands.

In all these exchanges each side gives the other a detailed blueprint of what is required. Last summer WHCU, Ithaca, had a one-shot exchange program about county fairs that tied-in with a big local fair. But it won't send across its part of the fair program until next spring when the big fairs are held in England. The beauty of the exchange deals is that time is not of the essence.

Of course these are just samples. The BBC uses some two hours a week of programs about America, not including special talks and documentary bits for BBC programs.

Finally, the BBC has some fifty-odd stations in this country that regularly carry some BBC feature or special program. One network has an exchange program. The BBC, however, has two American programs that go to their full network, in addition to a host of others that are broadcast locally. Whereas a minority of American stations carry the BBC programs, every BBC outlet on the network carries ours.

For American broadcasters the BBC shows are usually an opportunity to grab some publicity or to get a good special feature at little cost. For the BBC and the British listener American material is part and parcel of a good program service, letting people know what is going on in the world.

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# BOOKS *and the* ARTS

## Seaman's Luck

The sick one in a fo'c'sle fevered
And creaking on a sour sea,
In dreams conjures a calm landfall,
The morning star in a bay reflected.

Gray and cold, the ocean damp
Blows from the forward hatch in gusts;
The humid engines throb and tramp.
Are his dreams death's forethoughtfulness,

Or will the bridge bring out of mists
The lofty land, the cloudy sweet
Fields of the old land, old kingdom?
He dreams he never knew those lawns

Nor, bashful, his embowered home,
The veined leaves dusky in the air,
Nor heart at ease in sighing summer,
His woman cool beside his knee—
The sunset flush upon
Her cheek's classic inclination.

ROBERT FITZGERALD

## Jazz and Categories

*SHINING TRUMPETS: A HISTORY OF JAZZ.* By Rudi Blesh. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

MR. BLESH, who used to lecture on jazz at the San Francisco Museum of Art, has now written a big, useful, but grandiose book on the subject. He is an articulate enthusiast, and he has a good deal of fascinating scholarship to impart. He works earnestly at the major job that faces anyone who would address the tyro on jazz—constantly leading him away from the desolate commercial music that dominates the radio and phonograph, and toward the really gifted, ardent playing. Mr. Blesh demonstrates with more detail than I have seen before that the influence of West African tribal music is central in jazz, and that sacred and secular Afro-American song led directly to the jazz band. He writes clearly about musical forms and assists his text with all manner of scholarly apparatus—including a wonderfully evocative photograph of a colored funeral procession, with brass, in Gretna, Louisiana.

This reviewer is further pleased to find that Mr. Blesh's taste in jazz often closely approaches his own. Mr. Blesh belongs among those *aficionados* who especially admire the improvised polyphony developed by New Orleans Negroes in the first two decades of the century: the great names include Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, etc. This tradition has recently been represented by New Orleans veterans of the period, including the sixty-five-year-old Bunk Johnson and Kid Ory. But any such heartful, spirited playing today is all but drowned in the din of music commercially geared or desperate for novelty, or both. The big "swing" bands deal very largely in mechanical formulas, such as the "riff." The little "salon swing" combinations deal in cold ingenuity. The newest fad, which somewhere or other acquired the perfectly appropriate name "re-bop," deals in "screwiness"—it is "salon swing" freaked up with dissonantal harmony (Mr. Blesh does not deign to mention it, or else he went to press before its tortuous inventions reached his ears). I will take a stand with Mr. Blesh in favor of lyric spontaneity—genuine song. The old New Orleans jazz masters had it. It was essential to jazz in its capital city, and still seems so to many "reactionaries" today.

Unfortunately, Mr. Blesh is rather wooden about all this. His critical tack reminds one of the German methodologists. He has a system. Thus, having set the old New Orleans heroes up as his criteria, he declares, in effect, that anything outside the New Orleans style is not "real jazz." There are many of us who feel that the lively and various art of music will always mock such pigeonholing. Mr. Blesh, for instance, has unkind things to say about the famous Bix Beiderbecke, who did not play like a New Orleans Negro (he was a Davenport, Iowa, white man): "Objectively considered, Beiderbecke's playing is weak. . . ." Having no notion how to reach Mr. Blesh in his objectivity, I can only assure him that, subjectively, many people quite devoted to New Orleans music have also found Beiderbecke a choice musician indeed. If his is not "real jazz" they will reject Mr. Blesh's category rather than Bix.

In short, Mr. Blesh often gives the impression of paying more attention to his system than to specific musical performances. But those who will concentrate on specific performances rather than on formulas may hear remarkable playing, in various accents of the jazz language, not only from the New Orleans Negroes and from Beiderbecke, but from Joe Smith, J. C. Higginbotham, Fats Waller, Bud Freeman, Earl Hines, Floyd O'Brien, Red Nichols, Miff Mole, and many others. The improvisatory, fugitive art of jazz has many kinds of musical pleasure to offer, depending on what talent is present and their spirit of the moment; when conditions are favorable in this regard, striking music may even be heard from such unlikely groups as big "swing" bands, "salon swing" ensembles, or "re-bop" combinations.

Mr. Blesh has not only a system. He also has a purpose. He talks repeatedly of musical "progress." He admires jazz, among other reasons, because it is "modern" or even farther along than that: ". . . jazz, in the New Orleans sense, is still far in advance of the times." He will not rest with jazz as a musical language which may be used intensely and poetically; he must have it conquer all. And like most critics who are not content to illumine an art, but must also pound the drum for it, his style is sometimes deafening:

> Jazz music relates . . . to the concepts, the discoveries, the motivations of our time. For one thing, its ceaseless

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movement and its free melodies in combined variation are analogous to pure movement in time and space. Like natural process, jazz has no real beginning, no real end.

Our modern "serious" music is not contemporary in any such sense. Even in its most radical form it is conditioned by earlier and outmoded concepts of form and energy, of time and space. Looked at objectively [sic], it has no direction to take, implicit in its own past development, which will make it contemporary with the vast speculation, the uneasy, ceaseless, and portentous movements of our time. To achieve meaning it must place a forever incipient rhythmic and melodic movement into the pathway of polyphony. This movement is improvisation; with it, Western music as we know it disappears and its composers, too.

This kind of pompous semantic tangle does not, fortunately, occur very often in the book—on page after page Mr. Blesh is a lucid instructor. But if his ruminations have persuaded him to hope for a future without the composer, I can only say that I hope to continue enjoying both Ma Rainey's blues and the written works of architectonic musical minds. I daresay there will be interesting future activity in both traditions.

WILDER HOBSON

## The Unmoved Mover

*LABOR AND THE LAW.* By Charles O. Gregory. W. W. Norton and Company. $5.

THIS book exhibits a kind of legal ambivalence characteristic only of the more astute constitutional lawyer. On the one hand, Professor Gregory recognizes that law, especially in labor cases, is what the judges say it is; on the other, he advocates the thesis that our legal system is a supra-human referee unaffected by the emotional and class interests of men. This viewpoint might be acceptable if justices and lawmakers were platonic philosophers capable of separating themselves from the tumult of organized pressures. That this is not so has been recently emphasized by the furor over coal in Judge Goldsborough's chambers.

Professor Gregory's perspective is clear and sure when he deals with cases at least fifty years old. His discussion of the theory of criminal conspiracy and the common law reveals an enviable comprehension of the class basis of legal doctrine. Industry had to be encouraged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; if there was a choice to be made between the civil rights of the factory owner and of the worker, the courts were bound to protect the former. This, as the author says, was the only sensible course to take. Only when workingmen began to secure for themselves the privilege of voting were the political scales upset and the right of labor to seek its own economic destiny grudgingly acknowledged.

The chapter on the injunction bears rereading today. It is a workmanlike survey of the use to which this pernicious instrument has been put, and it emphasizes the fact that many courts were only too anxious to issue injunctive orders on the basis of some personal distaste for a union's program. In fact, most of Professor Gregory's treatment of pre-New [illegible]l experience is sound. He recognizes the severe and unfair limitations placed on labor unions and takes a keen delight in excoriating the pettifogging opinions of the judiciary.

But this conception of the law absolute does not allow for any bias. Thus, the exclusion of unions from the Sherman act is said to be a dangerous precedent, for some of labor's activities have become harmful to both consumers and the national economy. In actuality, says the author, the Supreme Court has done unionism a disservice by allowing it too much economic power. The only way out for a court "mired so deeply in its own complicated circuity of words" is by the infusion of new members or by Congressional legislation directed at the "market restraints of labor."

Continuing in the same vein, Professor Gregory discovers that peaceful picketing is a dubious kind of social conduct which ought to be regulated by the individual states. If that is not done, he warns, we shall live in a climate of economic absolutism dominated by organized labor. That, of course, is something to be feared.

The central thesis of this book is not at all obscured by the author's philosophy of state above all. His own bias seems obvious. He would have us accept the belief that government mediates between labor, management, farmers, and consumers. Government, however, is of these groups, not over them. And law and judicial opinion almost always depend on which one exerts the strongest pressure.

BEN B. SELIGMAN

## Chopping a Teakettle

*THE WILD FLAG.* By E. B. White. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.

THE flowers of the earth are the wild flag, the true banner of internationalism. There is a better phrase for it in Yiddish: *hacken a tcheinik,* which means to chop a teakettle, or in American idiom, to talk up a breeze—of nonsense. E. B. White, in these paragraphs testifying to the *New Yorker's* conscience, proves himself a master-craftsman; not only does he chop away with an unfailing stroke, but he manages to keep a cloud of steam issuing from the spout as he works.

There is no such thing as urbanity without partisanship. Appearances to the contrary, the *New Yorker* has always upheld a set of values—the values, to be sure, which are sacred to its own bourgeois sophistication. Until recently, cuteness has been this magazine's only form of prayer; it has worshiped its own tone with the cute, the coy, the cunning remark. The scheme of its prayer has been not to call forth but to conceal the god. The *New Yorker* did not believe in committing itself bluntly, and it made cute fun of those who do. But with the advent of the war, conscience, which where the middle class is concerned is best defined as the fear of dispossession, demanded that it justify the ways of its god to man. Then behold, the Lord of Park Avenue and suburbia, the Supreme Profile, revealed His full face and declared Himself in favor of world government.

But He has need of His cloud, which is where Mr. White's services come in; for if it is His own fear and trembling that the cloud hides, still it will appear that it hides His wrath. ("These editorials . . . were written sometimes in anger,"

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says Mr. White.) "A Chinese farmer in a rice paddy would have to feel, between his toes, not only the immediate wetness of his own field but the vast wetness of the fertile world," saith the Teakettle, apropos of the obligation that world government would put on each man to take "the entire globe to his bosom." "The special feeling of an Englishman for a stream in Devonshire or a lane in Kent would have to run parallel to his pride in Athens and his insane love of Jersey City." Note well this last parable. A false god would have said Brooklyn; but only the true Teakettle, than Whom there is none more uptown, would have known when to say Jersey City.

The *New Yorker's* task is to convert its own apostates: they whom it sustained in archness and in coyness and in the *bon ton* of small talk, on whose middle brows it laid its blessing, exalting their emptiness—they shall now receive the Word. Thus it is that we have world government praised and national sovereignty denounced on every page, but nothing about actual politics. It is *bon ton* to mention fascism and racism and come out against them. But capitalism, imperialism, world markets, the profit system, exploitation, revolution, socialism—these words have a sweaty air; they suggest crowded downtown East Side meeting halls with their folding chairs and smoke in the dingy room, the stain in the armpits of the excited speaker. (And if these images are clichés—for which reason, among others, the *New Yorker* avoids the reality for which they stand—they are no triter than the more aseptic middle-class images that the *New Yorker* does employ: politics must keep abreast of science, our ideas must be as long-range as the latest bomber.) The limits of tone are the limits of class. There is a good reason why the *New Yorker* liberal must simper as he does. What his sense of urbanity allows him to say corresponds exactly with the limits of what his sense of politics—if he had any—would allow him to do. A fundamental revision of society, a practical consideration of the revolutionary measures necessary to the establishment of world government are in bad taste—and small wonder. The bourgeoisie will never give up its tone without a struggle.

But Mr. White asks very little. "If these topical paragraphs add an ounce to the long-continuing discussion of nationalism and throw even as much as a flashlight gleam on the wild flag which our children, and their children, must learn to know and love, I am content."

Block that metaphor! ISAAC ROSENFELD

# BRIEFER COMMENT

## The Amiable Past

GOVERNOR COX'S "Journey Through My Years" (Simon and Schuster, $4.50) is a pleasantly old-fashioned volume of political reminiscence. It has somewhat the tone of the late nineteenth century, when politicians could still put their own pens to paper but the results tended to dissolve into anecdotes and affability. Governor Cox's memories both of people and of events are sensible and undiscriminatingly good-tempered rather than incisive or penetrating. Only occasionally, as in his account of his fight for the League of Nations or his fight against Gene Talmadge in Georgia, do ancient emotions disturb the even tenor of his prose.

The portrait of Roosevelt suffers from the prevailing amiability. Cox picked him sight unseen as vice-presidential candidate in 1920, and they remained in friendly if intermittent contact till Roosevelt's death. Cox was broadly sympathetic with the New Deal, though he disapproved of its labor policies and of the FEPC and used to urge the President to "cast a smile on business." His account of the London Economic Conference betrays a certain asperity and differs from Professor Moley's version; but on the whole the Governor has handled Roosevelt, and everyone else, with the same genial discretion which prevents him, for example, from disclosing his final conversation with Wendell Willkie. He thereby indulges admirable personal traits with callous disregard for the future historian. An unregenerate Yankee must further regret that an ex-governor of Ohio, evidently corrupted by the fact that he runs an excellent newspaper in Atlanta, Georgia—or by the fact that he once represented Vallandigham's district in Congress—sees fit to refer twice to something he calls the War Between the States.

ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER, JR.

## A Stock Life

IN SPITE of its stately format Herbert Weinstock's new life of Handel (Knopf, $5) is neither an important nor a particularly interesting biography. It is a chronicle account of Handel's career, rewritten from secondary sources in a pedestrian term-paper prose style, and adds nothing to our rather scrappy knowledge of Handel as man or musician, while omitting a good deal available elsewhere. Its principal merits are that Mr. Weinstock prints entire the small correspondence that is extant, and quotes *in extenso* many contemporary press notices, where Flower and others content themselves with excerpts. About Handel's personality Mr. Weinstock appears to have formed no opinion—at least he ventures none, either by statement or by organization of material—while he handicaps the reader's attempt to form one by omitting any mention of such important data as the interesting inventory of Handel's house. The short discussions of the music give no particular evidence of personal reaction or insight, and Mr. Weinstock's method of dealing with its few controversial aspects—such as the origins of the


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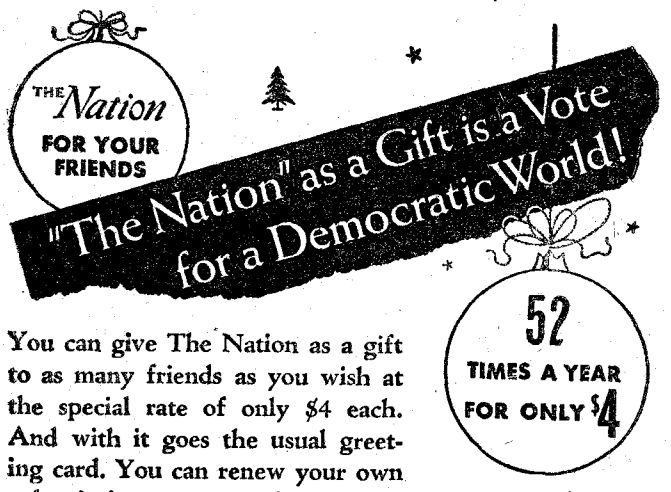


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"Water Music" and the question of plagiarism—is to straddle the nearest fence. Except "Jeptha," none of Handel's musical autographs, most of which are extant, are discussed, and there is not even a complete catalogue of Handel's works. In fact, aside from the bare account of the events of Handel's existence, Mr. Weinstock appears to suffer from the belief that modern readers of biography are afraid of a straightforward presentation of the known data, and so he falls back either on simplification, as in mentioning Handel's astrological dating of scores, or on silence. The extra features claimed by the blurb—among them "many entertaining vignettes" of Handel's time, its *mores,* and his associates—are, unfortunately, meager and dull; Flower's pompous biography is superior in this respect. Finally, the presence of trivial but elementary errors—Handel's first use of the double bassoon is misdated, and Dr. Pepusch's share in the "Beggar's Opera" is exaggerated, on the strength of an unfortunate quotation from Burney—suggests that Mr. Weinstock is none too well grounded in the period.

CHARLES B. FARRELL

## Sex and Authority

WILHELM REICH approaches a central intellectual problem—the relationship between our two most seminal and revolutionary systems, Marxism and Freudianism—by rejecting much of both. But he retains their essential revolutionary spirit, and unlike many recent psychiatrists trying their hand at sociology, he does not evade difficulties with facile phrases about "adjustment" and "progress."

His main contribution, "The Mass Psychology of Fascism" (Orgone Institute Press, $4.50), is a detailed demonstration of the correlation between political authoritarianism and sexual suppression. Acceptance of the Führer principle in politics he sees as an outward aspect of a character structure cowed by the father image and fearful of its orgastic potentiality. "The goal of sexual suppression is that of producing an individual who is adjusted to the authoritarian order and will submit to it in spite of all misery and degradation." Especially brilliant is Reich's historical account of the parallel development of political totalitarianism and sexual irrationality under the Hitler and Stalin dictatorships.

Reich's power as social analyst is not sustained in his programmatic sections. He sees nature as an intrinsic good, accessible if the authoritarian clamps on natural sexuality are removed, and succumbs to that characteristically self-condemnatory and self-compensatory theory of distraught intellectuals, that the proletariat has greater sexual health than other classes. He is thereby led to regard orgastic potency as the major prerequisite for social reconstruction. His elevation of the sexual factor to historical primacy leads him to abandon Marxian categories for sexually evaluative categories. Since he now rejects all political activity, Reich can propose nothing but the attempt to live according to his principles—which means either individual self-improvement or utopian communities that are necessarily futile.

Reich's picture of the orgastically potent man as the true revolutionary ignores class status and interests, and ends in sexual utopianism. But his analysis of the relationhip between society and sexual norms is valuable and brilliant.

IRVING HOWE

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# Films

*JAMES AGEE*

STUFF the following with sage and serve hot, with soda-mints, to men of sufficiently good will:

"It's a Wonderful Life," Frank Capra's first film since those he made for the army, is one of the most efficient sentimental pieces since "A Christmas Carol." Often, in its pile-driving emotional exuberance, it outrages, insults, or at least accosts without introduction, the cooler and more responsible parts of the mind; it is nevertheless recommended, and will be reviewed at length as soon as the paralyzing joys of the season permit.

"Wanted for Murder," an English melodrama, stars Eric Portman as a middle-class mother's boy who can't keep his hands off the throats of working girls, of whom he strangles several before Scotland Yard catches up with him. To have held out so long, he is remarkably careless at his work, dropping a marked handkerchief near one corpse, a shard of cigar near another, and the balance of the cigar in Inspector Conway's ash-tray. He even knocks the head off his late, mad uncle, "The Happy Hangman," who is on exhibit at Madame Tussaud's and under whose influence the hero does his killing. Neck-deep as he stands in a blizzard of such manna, Roland Culver manages to make the Inspector seem capable and subtle as well as likable. Mr. Portman, who suggests a cross between Paul Henreid and Louis Calhern, gives the maniac a dangerous, melancholic grace. Both men seem to me considerably more persuasive than most of the bench-dogs who are paid to charm women in American films; but not being a woman—not even an American woman—I am ill-qualified to judge. This is a pleasant, unpretentious thriller of the second or third grade, with oddly contradictory streaks of good and crude directing, and some beautifully exciting shots of Hyde Park as a police cordon clears away the rattled crowds and closes, through the twilight, for the kill.

"Till the Clouds Roll By" is a little like sitting down to a soda-fountain de luxe atomic special of maple walnut on vanilla on burnt almond on strawberry on butter pecan on coffee on raspberry sherbet on tutti frutti with hot fudge, butterscotch, marshmallow, filberts, pistachios, shredded pineapple, and rainbow sprills on top, go double on the whipped cream. Some of the nuts, it turns out, are a little stale, and wandering throughout the confection is a long bleached-golden hair, probably all right in its place but, here, just a little more than you can swallow. This hair, in the difficult technical language of certain members of the Screen Writers' Guild who exult in my non-professionalism—political as well as cinematic—would, I suppose, be called the "story-line." The story is enough of the life and not very hard times of the late Jerome Kern to make you want either not to hear any of it at all or to get the real story instead. Besides the story, however, the picture contains something over twenty stars and featured players, many of them nice people, and they sing no less than twenty-two of Kern's songs. If, as I do, you like a good deal of his graceful, nacreous music, the picture is pleasantly, if rather stupefyingly, worth all the bother. The songs are nearly all sung with care and affection, though not one that I have heard before is done here quite as well as I have heard it elsewhere. The most surprising defection is the failure, twice around, to give "Old Man River" any of the pulse and momentum which go so far toward making it Kern's best song. Both Sinatra and a colored singer do it, instead, with all misplaced reverence, as if they were retranslating at sight, out of Tacitus, the Emancipation Proclamation. This I realize is called *feeling* the music; for that kind of feeling I prefer W. C. Fields's cadenza on the zither, which was rendered in sparring-gloves.

# Music

*B. H. HAGGIN*

IN A conversation, a few weeks ago, which began with Balanchine's latest ballet and eventually got to Toscanini's recent performances, Carl Van Vechten remarked that he spoke as one who knew Toscanini's great period at the Metropolitan. "The first year there were both Mahler and Toscanini dividing almost the entire repertory between them. In those days Toscanini would conduct a 'Tristan' or a 'Götterdämmerung' that was overwhelming; but the thing to hear was his performance of early Verdi—of 'La Traviata.'" As it happened, only a few days after this conversation Toscanini conducted a performance of "La Traviata" for N. B. C., and millions of us got an idea of what Mr. Van Vechten had talked about.

Millions of us, that is, for whom this opera had been a discontinuous series of sections pulled out of shape by the vocal exhibitionism of competing stars, heard for the first time phrases in which even the tenor's and soprano's high notes were part of the plastically modeled contours—heard whole acts which by such plastic continuity in pace and sonority from phrase to phrase and section to section were made into organically coherent entities. I have a strong suspicion—having not yet checked with Mr. Van Vechten—that this performance was in some ways different from the ones he heard Toscanini conduct at the Metropolitan. I suspect that, although basically the same in style, in those days the performance was slower and had an operatic rhetorical expansiveness, and that now it is swifter, tenser, and—after Toscanini's long preoccupation with symphonic music—closer knit and more compressed. The style, then, is the same, but refined, clarified, and—as a friend observed of the wonderful performance of Mozart's "Haffner" Symphony earlier in the year—"apotheosized." As for the effect, there were moments which I thought would have gained by the earlier expansiveness, but others which unquestionably gained by the new urgency.

The performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3 in which Toscanini invited Dame Myra Hess to play brought surprises. He is fanatical about tempo—about setting the right tempo, about maintaining it unchanged once it has been set; and his strong convictions make him inflexible: years ago they caused him to cancel the performance of a concerto in which a greater pianist than Dame Hess was to play. It was amazing, therefore, to have him, this time, allow her to slow down the first movement after the orchestral introduction, which he had taken even faster than in the performance with Rubinstein two years ago; and to have him also accept in the second movement a tempo much slower than that of the Rubinstein performance, and slower, I am certain, than he liked.

As for her performance of the solo part, I recall being charmed by the lovely sounds and phrases she produced from the piano when she first came here; but in later years her playing became sentimental and affected (as in the recorded performance of the Schumann Concerto), and even pompous (in concert performances of the F minor So-

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nata and—if I remember correctly—B flat Concerto of Brahms, the G major Concerto of Beethoven). In her Telephone Hour broadcast this year, after a spirited performance of a Bach Gigue, she went through the first movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 488 with the sensitive-fingered placidity of a talented conservatory pupil, only to shock one in the cadenza with some of the archly prettifying phrasing of the matured Myra Hess. And in the performance of the Beethoven concerto with Toscanini she produced the necessary vigor—and little else—in the fast movements, but surprised one with inflection of the cantilena of the slow movement that imparted to it no tensile strength, and no firmness or sharpness of contour.

Mention of the Telephone Hour reminds me that having been paying considerable attention to this program in recent months I wondered at Mr. Lou Frankel's recommendation of it on his "worth hearing" list several weeks ago: "Week in and week out this is one of the finest musical programs in radio." Having in fact been paying attention to all such programs I wondered again at his later recommendation of Harvest of Stars: "Good music by Frank Black and good singing by James Melton. . . ." (As an ordinary citizen I have ventured to wonder at some of Mr. Frankel's non-musical recommendations—for example, of Arthur Godfrey, or of even the best Mr. and Mrs. team.) Harvest of Stars on December 1 offered Ruiz's "Amor," "Home on the Range," Gershwin's "Strike up the Band," Kern's "Why Do I Love You?," and Grofé's "On the Trail." And without meaning that Gershwin and Kern are bad, I would point out that they are not what music-lovers usually mean when they say "good music." The music they mean is not offered on the countless network studio programs like Harvest of Stars, which feature big-name performers in popular and semi-classical music.

Only the Telephone Hour occasionally varies the formula with a little "good music"—like the two Bach pieces and the movement of Mozart's K. 488 played by Dame Hess, the movements from a Bach sonata for unaccompanied violin played by Heifetz. It is, then, the best of the programs of this kind; but it is not "week in and week out . . . one of the finest musical programs of radio"; it is not even good week in and week out. Trading in eminences, it repeatedly presents Kreisler and Hofmann, whose eminence no longer rests on ability to play well. Moreover it presents Kreisler playing things like "Stars in My Eyes" and "The Rosary," and on the other hand Hofmann in a first movement of Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto with exposition and development sections sliced out. And if Dame Hess plays Bach and Mozart it is after a movement from Glazunov's "Scenes de Ballet"; if Traubel sings the finale of "Tristan" it is after the ballet music from Goldmark's "Queen of Sheba."

Outside of the Metropolitan Opera and the Philadelphia Orchestra on Saturdays, the New York Philharmonic and the N. B. C. Symphony on Sundays, the Boston Symphony on Tuesdays, the networks offer very little "good music"—a few half-hours, most of them late at night or early Sunday morning. C. B. S. offers Invitation to Music at 11:30 Wednesday nights, a program from the Juilliard School at 11:30 Thursday nights, a Biggs organ recital at 9:15 Sunday mornings; N. B. C. an operatic program at 11:30 Thursday nights; A. B. C. a string quartet at 11:00 Sunday mornings (not on WJZ New York); M. B. S. the Pro Arte Quartet at 2:00 Saturdays (not on WOR New York), and the Cleveland Symphony that Mr. Frankel mentioned, for all of an hour on Saturdays at 6:00 (so that one can't use it to "relax . . . after dinner").

## Art

*CLEMENT GREENBERG*

THIS year's Whitney Annual (through January 16) is no worse than last year's—which amounts almost to an improvement, since each of the Annuals in the three or four years previous had been worse than the one before it. That, apparently, is what American painting, sampled wholesale, has been like. But this is not a new discovery.

Of course, the fault lies chiefly with the artists themselves, and I am sure that not even the notorious egoism of painters has prevented some of them from recognizing that. Yet in view of the *evenness* with which the Whitney shows have been bad, the suspicion grows that a more considerable part of the blame than one used to think is assignable to those who run the place. Their lack of strong-mindedness, of serious bias, of any intense and constant perception of the tasks of modern art and of the direction in which it solves them best, their eclectic conformism, their eagerness to receive and their dread of finding, their affable timidity—all this creates something in its own image, and that image is any Whitney Annual as a whole. The same goes, with some modifications, for the people who run the Museum of Modern Art, the Carnegie Annual, the Pepsi-Cola shows, and so on. Obviously, American art is in the wrong hands.

However, the responsibility has to be placed even deeper. Primary is the fact that the selection of our museum directors and curators is not susceptible to the pressure of any real opinion from outside the academic world. There exists in this country no self-assured, self-intelligible class of connoisseurs and amateurs of art with defined and independent tastes. Collectors, critics, and simple enthusiasts depend on slogans, worded and unworded, that they cull from everything except their own experience.

Perhaps the fact that we have been the pupils of France in art for the last thirty years helps account for this. But even more important, I think, is the absence of a stable leisured or a self-confident intellectual class in this country, prepared to rally to each other's help against the attrition of journalism, fashion, publicity, and kitsch. As it is, the "art world" in America remains a parody the object of which varies—now the fashion world, now the literary world, now the night-club world, now Miss Dickinson's garden. And when it comes closest to the reality of that with

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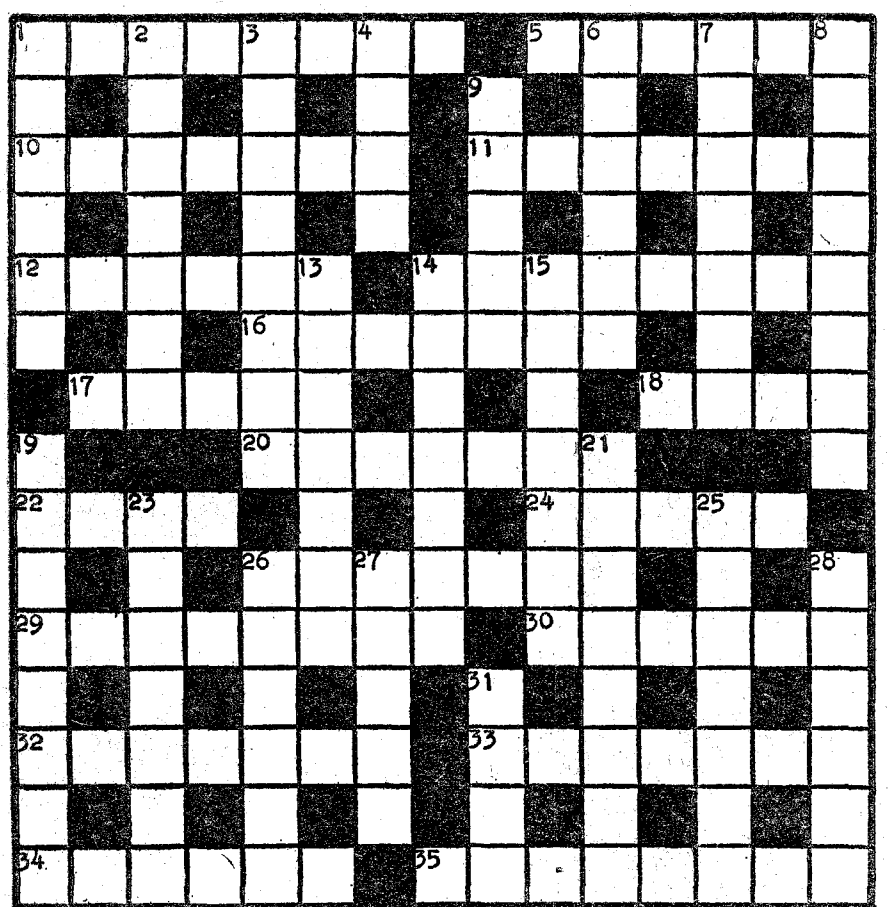
# Crossword Puzzle No. 192

By JACK BARRETT



## ACROSS

1 Neither a pantomime nor a movie is any longer this
5 Lodges (4 and 2)
10 Generated by water power?
11 Separation that is "such sweet sorrow"
12 Compels payment in full
14 Ranks below an embassy
16 "Forgiveness to the ------- does belong; But they never pardon who have done the wrong"
17 In which men jump over each other in an effort to change places
18 "---- in doubt, win the trick" (Hoyle's rule for card-players)
20 Broke out
22 Adored, if not truly adorable
24 Five in a Scottish dance. It's a riot!
26 Non-clerical
29 Something has been added—this perhaps
30 He puts Levi first
32 What musical instrument was made of terra-cotta?
33 They don't come out on Sundays
34 The more thorough the tanning, the better he likes it
35 Convergences which often reveal only divergences

## DOWN

1 Made short in port
2 She looked in vain for her lover to come—by bridge or boat, presumably
3 A harrowing period for the country (4-4)
4 An imprecation
6 Ignorant, as far as book learning is concerned
7 Beastly
8 By no means a heathen in music
9 Hand that gives the V sign
13 What the surly dog did
14 A heavy payment (4 and 3)
15 Maid-of-all-work
19 Dance with which a Scot might celebrate the fall of a Baltic port
21 Abandoned
23 Not baby's little fist (3 and 4)
25 A case of pronounced suppression
26 A delicacy in France and Germany
27 A West Indian
28 They enlarge one's vision
31 Tool which is sometimes curtailed

### SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 191

ACROSS:—1 CARMEN; 4 KNITTING; 10 ADVANCE; 11 EMERSON; 12 NERVE; 13 LIE; 14 SMITH; 15 STEVE; 17 KINGPOST; 21 BED LINEN; 23 PETAL; 26 SPAIN; 28 LIS; 29 OVERT; 30 UTILITY; 31 CAPITOL; 32 DINGDONG; 33 ANGELA.

DOWN:—1 CLANNISH; 2 REVERIE; 3 ERNIE; 5 NIECE; 6 TRESS; 7 INSTILS; 8 GANDHI; 9 SEALSKIN; 16 ELL; 18 NONESUCH; 19 PEP; 20 FLOTILLA; 22 EVASION; 24 THEATRE; 25 OSMUND; 27 NAIAD; 28 LAY ON; 29 ORPEN.

which it deals, it parodies the stock market.

As for the paintings at the Whitney, their shortcomings lie not so much in their execution as in their conception. Everybody knows more or less how to paint. Examine any picture, and you will see a good amount of knowledge and manual competence in it, if not sensitivity. And you will even see enough of that. Everybody knows what has *already* made painting great. But very few know, feel, or suspect what makes painting great anywhere and at any time—that it is necessary to register what the artist makes of himself and his experience in the world, not merely to record his intentions, foibles, and predilections. The same tastes that lead one to prefer scrambled eggs to fried are not enough to furnish the content of a picture. The trouble with American art is that it substitutes pretension for ambition.

The best painting at the present show is Jackson Pollock's "Two." Those who think that I exaggerate Pollock's merit are invited to compare this large vertical canvas with everything else in the Annual. Mark Tobey, too, is represented by a strong picture, but in the presence of the Pollock the minor quality of his achievement, original as it is, becomes even more pronounced than before.

I also liked Edward Hopper's landscape despite the crudeness of its greens and the academic superficiality of its facture. A special category of art should be devised for the kind of thing Hopper does. He is not a painter in the full sense; his means are second-hand, shabby, and impersonal. But his rudimentary sense of composition is sufficient for a message that conveys an insight into the present nature of American life for which there is no parallel in our literature, though that insight itself is literary. Hopper's painting is essentially photography, and it is literary in the way that the best photography is. Like Walker Evans's and Weegee's art, it triumphs over inadequacies of the physical medium; and the main difference between them is that while Evans's and Weegee's subjects do not give them time enough to calculate focus and exposure, Hopper simply happens to be a bad painter. But if he were a better painter, he would, most likely, not be so superior an artist.

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